

## Ch. 1 – daily "Non-Duality & Science" blogs

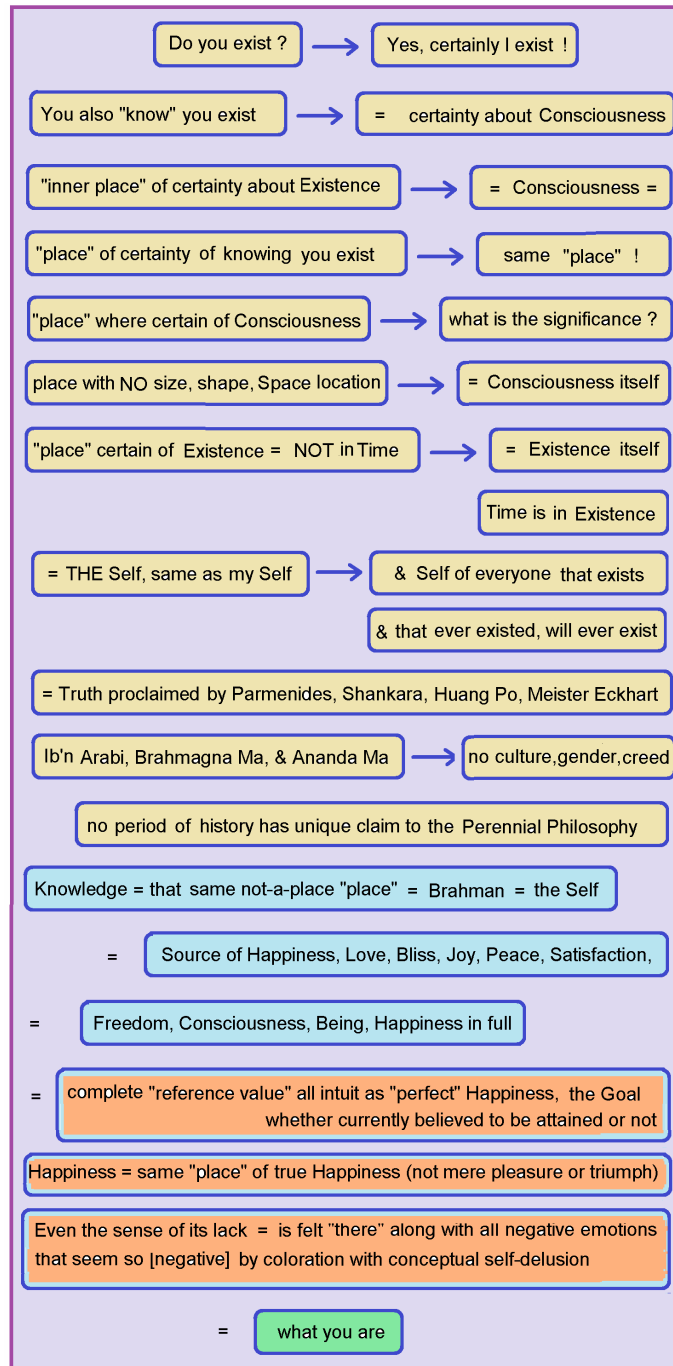
### TABLE OF CONTENTS

	page
#1) What If ?	3
#2) How can an absolute Non-dualist appreciate Science ?	8
#3) Non-dualist appreciating Science (short epilogue)	9
#4) Perception in terms of Buddhist Skandhas – an interpretation	10
#5) Virtual Reality VR	12
#6) Dimension Games	13
#7) Perception & Inquiry	15
#8) Self-Inquiry follow-up	15
#9) Homunculus	16
#10) Homunculus – 2	17
#11) Quantum 4 Schrödinger, Bohr, Heisenberg, von Neumann	18
#12) Nuclear Four-Fathers, or at least one of them	20
#13) Nikola Tesla, an Electro-Magnetism Four-Father	21
#14) Reality-break	23
#15) Finger Pointing to the Moon	23
#16) Sufi Nonduality	25
#17) Heart Sutra	27
#18) Idealist Perception	28
#19) Unity of Consciousness	29
#20) Hypothetical deleted scene from The Matrix	30
#21) Striking the target though aiming at an illusory substitute	31

#22) Inner Certainty	32
#23) Electrical RLC Circuit Analogy	33
#24) Inner Core	35
#25) Hypothetical deleted scene from the Avatar movie	36
#26) Jagad Jiva Para	38
#27) Pavilion	40
#28) William James on a hot day	42
#29) Janaka & Ashtavakra	44
#30) the 10th	46
#31) Jain Non-Duality Atma Siddhi 1	48
#32) Jain Non-Duality Atma Siddhi 2	51
#33) Jain Non-Duality Atma Siddhi 3	54
#34) Looking Back at the Matrix 1	57
#35) Looking Back at the Matrix 2	59
#36) Looking Back at the Matrix 3	62
#37) Looking Back at the Matrix 4	64
#38) Looking Back at the Matrix 5	66
#39) Looking Back at the Matrix 6	68
#40) Looking Back at the Matrix 7	70
#41) Looking Back at the Matrix 8	72
#42) Looking Back at the Matrix 9	77
#43) Looking Back at the Matrix 10	79
#44) Looking Back at the Matrix 11	84
#45) Looking Back at the Matrix 12	87
#46) Looking Back at the Matrix 13	89
#47) Looking Back at the Matrix 14	91
#48) Looking Back at the Matrix 15	94
#49) Looking Back at the Matrix 16	95
#50) Quantum duality	96
#51) a Story about "J"	99
#52) Happiness	100
#53) Humanizing the Great Sage	101
#54) Ego Caterpillar	104
#55) Radical Skepticism	107
#56) Parmenides & Melissus	110
#57) Parmenides himself	112
#58) Zeno Getting a Word In	113
#59) Parmenides Finale	115
#60) Zeno's (converging) infinite series error (retrospectively)	120
#61) Zeno's Finite Size argument against Plurality	121
#62) Quintessence of Vedanta	124
#63) Quintessence of Vedanta part 2	126
#64) Quintessence of Vedanta part 3	129

We discover it by being earnest  
by searching, Inquiring,  
questioning daily & hourly  
by giving one' life to this Discovery.

*selection from Nisargadatta' s I Am That*



## #1) What If ?

What if, for the sake of discussion, for the sake of argument, we start from some extreme position, & follow it to some resulting "down-stream" conclusions, just to see where it gets us ? I can't promise that we stick to any given criteria of strict Logic or Proof, but perhaps some "ring" of truth remains after the speculative exercise. The other promise

might have to be relinquished, for instance, if the validity of that same Logic or Proof only "existed" at a far lesser "down-stream" level in the chain of speculation. To anchor these abstract ground-rules a bit, let's begin with our Protagonist deeply asleep. A very Wise One that he knows shakes his shoulder, awakens him rapidly, & asks quickly:

*Do you exist ?*

The former sleeper responds right or later relates the immediate response in him Mind:

*Yes, certainly I exist ! I just know that's true, spontaneously & undoubtedly.*

The Wise questioner counters with an observation & a 2<sup>nd</sup> confirming question:

*Oh I see, you "know" you exist like that. So can I agree that you "exist" & that you also "know" – at least that much.*

Nodding his head in assent, the freshly awakened asks once for clarification & then listens for a while.

*Granted what you say, what is the significance ?*

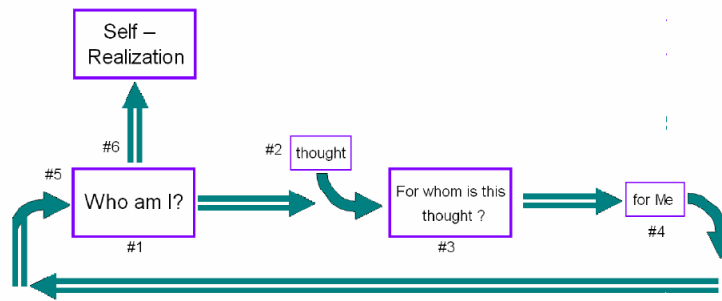
Asking the awakened to suspend judgment for bit, much as expressed at our beginning, the Wise One ventures on with his own "What if ?" scenario, with minimal detailed explanation or proof, getting no further argument or interrupting question from the listener. He speculates as follows, or with words to that effect.

That "inner place" in which you felt that certainty of your Existence, & also that certainty of your knowing so, your Consciousness, is actually the same "place". Moreover that "place" is not a *place*, having size or shape, & has no location in Space, or in Time for that matter. The very same "place" where you are certain of your Consciousness *is* actually your Consciousness itself. As also the very same "place" where you are certain of your Existence, it truly *is* your Existence, it is what you are, your Self.

And not only your Self, but the same is my Self, & the Self of everyone & all that exist, have ever existed, or will ever exist. That singular Existence or Being is the literal Truth proclaimed by Parmenides & Shankara, by Huang Po, Meister Eckhart, Ib'n al Arabi, Brahmagna Ma, & Ananda Ma. The point being that no culture, gender, creed, or period of history has unique claim to this recognition, this Knowledge known as the Perennial Philosophy.



This loop can be repeated to whatever extent necessary.  
In this model, the final round combines the "1 single Inquiry" to result in the following:



With repeated practice in this manner, Mind will develop the skill to stay in its source.  
When the Mind that is subtle goes out through the Brain & the Sense-Organs,  
the gross Names & Forms appear; when it stays inwardly directed,  
the Names & Forms disappear. Not letting the Mind go out,  
but retaining "inwardness", the "I" which is the source of all *Thoughts*,  
will vanish, & the Self which ever exists will shine.

Further observations include the fact that very same not-a-place "place" or Brahman or the Self is also experienced routinely as the Source of Happiness, Love, Bliss, Joy, Peace, Satisfaction, Freedom & the like. These are all one with Consciousness & Being, though Happiness in full is more often the complete "reference value" we all intuit, perfect Happiness, the goal, whether we currently believe it to be attained or not. That Source of Happiness is the same "place" where true Happiness (not mere pleasure or triumph) is actually felt, routinely. Even the sense of its lack could be said to be felt there along with all negative emotions that *seem* so [*negative*] by coloration with conceptual self-delusion.

Nodding his head again in awe more than yet assent, the freshly awakened asks once again in the same words:

*Granted what you say, what is the significance ?*

Much can & has been said & written about all the ramification & also restoring true Self-Identity through the meditation of inward Self-Inquiry. Any sincere seeker can find all that, especially now with the Internet to get started with. Given some sifting through apparently conflicting alternatives (& *some are conflicting*) & perhaps a few false turns, the one who truly desires Freedom (*Liberation from ignorance*) will have it.

This much can be said in closing for now. That begins above as a "What if ?" certainly is found to be factual, though this cannot be proven or even fruitfully argued from "this side" of the issue. Experimentally proceeding in a neutral, judgment-suspended "What if ?" approach, the following could be said to be the *significance* you ask about.

You & I & all are that same Self, though we may seem to be "caught" in a Waking Dream world of Time & Space (*at night, other dream words supervene, while in deep sleep, none at all*). While seeming so "caught", we best pursue Self-Inquiry, with

*authentic* texts that support that & qualified live guidance when possible. Other wise we progressively shine in our World (*even if obscurely*) fulfill responsibilities, relationships, work, etc. in Peace. Any help offered to what can appear as a stricken World & inevitable death in that World, comes from the inner basis, & less-so, the practical basis just described. This quest of Enlightenment, Liberation, is the most satisfying & *significant* venture possible.

By constantly fixing his attention on his source, the heart, the **Ego** of the Wise gets dissolved like a **salt doll** which has fallen into the **Ocean**.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

## #2) How can an absolute Non-dualist appreciate Science ?

In simplest terms (the tone of this post throughout) Absolute Non-duality denies that there is a *RWOT* Real World Out There. Yet even the Illusion, a projection of Mind, is a an ephemeral reflection on the one Consciousness. In the seeming Waking State (while not in Dream or Deep Sleep) Science can be said to be a "high" view, an insightful perspective on the Illusion (the Universe) from within that Illusion. If there is no World for Science to actually speak to, Science does in relative (non-absolute) terms speak to the Mind itself. Science models much of the Mind in a fairly clear manner. Depths of Mathematical Physics are awesome (but beyond our scope here), diving into Fractals can be beautiful, & so on, all through Neurology, crystal structure, what have you. But here, with no need for illustration, because the reader can so easily visualize her own, we conclude with a truly elementary example that is yet a platform for much insight. The following could even play some small part in self-examination that paves the way toward Liberation. We glance briefly at what makes middle school math interesting.

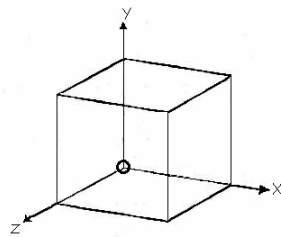
Rene Descartes on holiday in the mountains of Bohemia was lazy late in bed on a morning when his daydreaming bore fruit. Tracing a fly walking across a structured Inn ceiling, he found himself track the fly's meandering with what he later called the 2-D Coordinate system patterned on the ceiling. Rene himself had been groping for such a device in recent study of quadratic curves in Conic Sections, math he'd credit Greeks of an earlier millennium. Ancient fishermen had tide knots in anchor ropes & later in nets. Egyptian architects borrowed the net & rope-ruler schemes for pyramid construction. Greeks had further pioneered the geodesy of Latitude & Longitude. Arab philosophers & artists preserved these Greek & Egyptian "technologies" during Europe's Dark Ages & these ideas entered Andalusian Spain during their occupation. The same prompted perspective drawing & architecture so fundamental to the Renaissance, but only

Descartes organized 2-D "graphs" soon after that Bohemian holiday morning. What does urban legend say about the Universe projected by Mind & Mind itself?

The middle schooler might easily overlook the organized 2-D Space on her graph but in many way this model evolved into the computer screen, & along the way a common sense of the 2-D "screen of the visual Mind." The similar 3-D "theater of the Mind" is a close relative to our sense, & Newton's sense of Space itself. The older knotted rope might similarly be found tracing back from the sequence of Thought & the flow of Time, sound, & so on.

Container Coordinate Space	Coordinates	Origin	Macro-Origin/Mini- Coordinate Space	In – Out boundary
Time	1-D Moments	Now	Lifetime	birth-death
Space	3-D Locations	Here	Vicinity	this-that
World	3-D Objects 4-D Events	Brain Perceptor	Body Life-cycle	skin waking state
Mind	thoughts 1-D for the sequence of thought ~ 2-D for the visual screen of the Mind 3-D for the theater of the Mind ~ 4-D for lifetime identity Personality, born, growing, dying in Waking State Time ~	Ego	Personality	individual
<p>each Origin is the (0), (0,0), (0,0,0), (0,0,0,0) crossing point of Coordinate Axes horizontal Coordinate Axis is the Time-line, x – coordinate, etc. vertical, etc. Coordinate Axis is often named by the coordinate points.</p> <p>Macro-Origins / Mini-Coordinate Space are regions around the Origin that can be their "own little world" or gross-origin for the larger scale</p>				

Overlooking the widespread concept of the Coordinate Space in all its forms might have been harmless for the middle schooler but the underpins the Structural Realists adamant committed to a "real" Space or Space-Time. What could trip up the middle schooler eventually, however, would be to overlook the essential reference role of the Graph's Origin, point (0, 0) in 2-D. In the 3-D World of Space, the same is called Here. Along the 1-D Space of Time, the Origin is called Now. In the Space of Mind, the constellation of Thoughts are similarly all measure or referenced to the Origin call Me, or the Ego—"I". This is not the grand Brahman–Self "I"–less "I", the True Self. That Origin of Mind is the Ego, the imaginary obstacle to Enlightenment, gives every thought the meaning & seeming "reality" each has.



region in 3-D Space shifted to put Origin in its Center – could be a Mini-Container-Space in itself, & Macro-Origin for a Vicinity, etc

To run around with those Thoughts & run around in the World they create is the opposite of Enlightenment. Appearing to function in a World is fine, but Freedom requires recognition of that Ego-Origin, its falseness, its seem "place" or arising in Consciousness & final identification with that nondual Consciousness.

You are bodiless & Space-less in Deep Sleep, yet in the waking state & in Dream appear to be the opposite. Whatever the Dream, the only thing that has value & is worth doing with regard to Dream is to wake up. When you wake up, do you say that the experiences of the Dream were real, although within the Dream everyone there would have tried to convince you of it? No. Similarly, when you wake up to the Self these experiences of the World will be unreal, like in a Dream, although others in that state will try to convince you that they are real.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

### #3) Non-dualist appreciating Science (short epilogue):

Simple points appended to mention of Cartesian Coordinate Space as a model for:

1) Mind – where thoughts are the points & the Ego-"I" Me is there reference Origin (0, 0) etc.

Mind Space seems: 1-D for the sequence of thought

2-D for the visual screen of the Mind

3-D for the theater of the Mind

4-D for lifetime identity Personality, born, growing, dying in Waking State Time

2) Time – the 1-D Space of Time itself overlaps somewhat with the Mind's 1-D for the sequence of thought, with Moments for the points on the Timeline & Now for the Origin (0).

3) Space – physical, is 3-D with Here as the Origin, or as 4-D Space-Time with Here & Now at (0,0,0,0).

4) World – fills Space with objects, etc. as points with an *extended* as the Body. While Hearing naturally parallels Time in Sound & Music, all being mostly 1-D, Vision naturally scans 3-D Space. These sense perceptions along with Tactile, etc. senses *concretize* a World. While the Body is an *extended* or Macro-Origin reference Origin for the coordinate space of the World, that same Body can be a Mini-Space in itself, with it own smaller Macro-Origin as perhaps the Brain. The Body-skin marks the *inside-outside* boundary in the World.

Container Coordinate Space	Characteristic Sense mode	Dimension	Classical phase
Time	Hearing	1-D	air – gas
Space	Vision	3-D	ether – space
World	Tactile	3-D	earth – solid
Mind	Gustatory Olfactory	0-D	water – liquid

Similar Macro-Origins / Mini-Coordinate Space concepts could be inserted around each of the other Origins mentioned above, thus also defining *inside–outside* boundaries. For Time, this could be My Lifetime. For Space it might be my Vicinity, a changing reference by which locations or positions in Space are is variously appraised. Around the core Ego Origin of Mind, some extended Personality or such could be imagined to separate thoughts in some *inside–outside* way.

Container	Coordinate	Space	models	
Spaces	Mind	Time	Space	World
Origins	Ego	Now	Here	Brain
Coord Points	Thoughts	Moments	Locations	Objects
mini–Container /macro–Origins	Personality	Lifetime	Vicinity	Body
0-D	Smell Taste			
1-D	Sequence	Hearing		
2-D	Screen		Vision	
3-D	Theater			Tactile
Internal Organ Antahkarana	tamasic Ahankara	Chitta mindstuff Emotion	Buddhi Intellect	rajasic Manas
Ether	Solid	Liquid	Air	Light Fire Energy

The point of these simplistic models is to suggest that Mind, Time, Space, & the World are not *objective* "givens" of fixed qualities. Different people experience these differently, & each of us does also at different times. However modeled, or not, these are mental projections, not fixed realities. The Coordinate Space models suggest that the same old "space with a center" Idea is repeated over & over again for Mind, Time, Space, & the World. More importantly, these represent the *net* of Illusion that distracts us from recognition of the core Identity, the Nondual Brahman, the Self of absolute Existence, pure nondual Consciousness, & complete Happiness, Love, Bliss, Peace, & Liberation.

Self-Inquiry traces back along short or long routes from any of the above, especially from Thoughts, questing "Whose thought?" "Mine." "Who am I ?" "Whence am I ?" which is to say finding the "place" in Consciousness where the Ego-"I" seems to arise. Find it to never arise there, remain as that Consciousness, the Non-Dual Self.

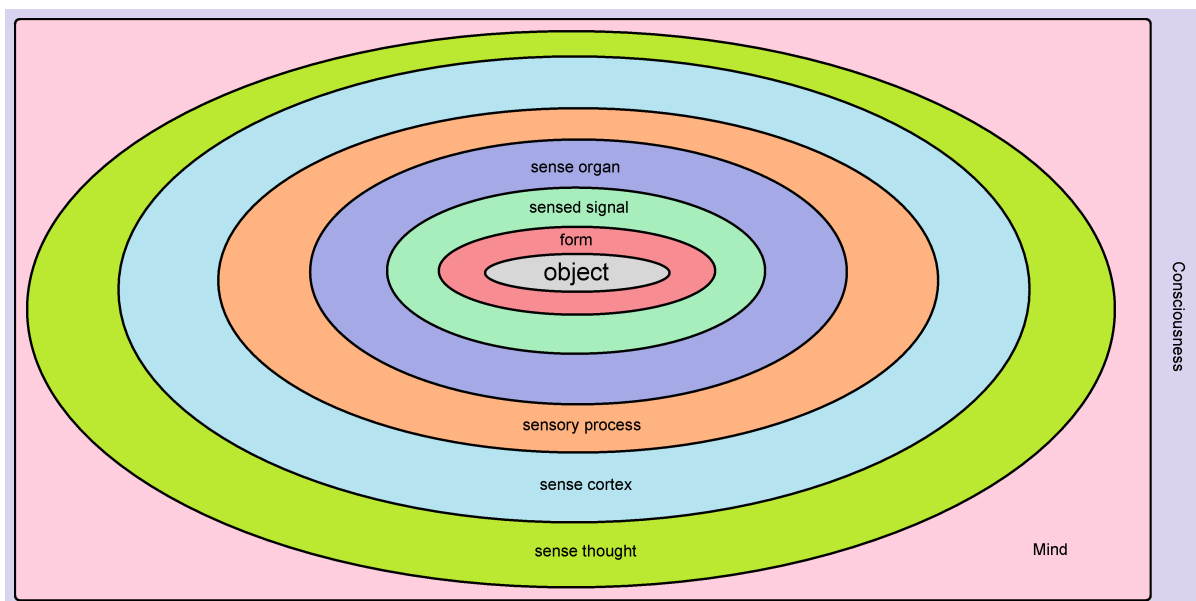
Liberation is ever present & bondage ever absent. That which is, is only Grace; there is nothing else; but as long as the Dream prevails, the Master must be sought & served to evoke the Grace

selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi

#### #4) Perception in terms of Buddhist Skandhas – an interpretation:

Perception analyzed with Qualified Non-Duality QND could be framed in terms of one interpretation of the Buddhist Skandhas which are traditionally discussed variously in other ways than what follows. The same holds for Dependent Origination which here is simplistically taken to mean: *if A requires B for its existence, & B requires A, then by "dependent origination" neither independently or truly exists.*

Letting Vision stand in for all the other Senses, with the understanding that the following can be applied to all of them, consider an Object of Visual Perception. That sense mechanism can never contact or verify the Object directly, being initially mediated by the Visual Form of the Object. Furthermore, what would be such a Form without an Object to which it applies, & what could be a Visual Object without the Form. Object & Form here are mutually-defining in the manner of Dependent Origination & thus neither is real in itself.



The Form in turn is detailed by the Perception signals, here light waves, Within Signal we include the entire chain of Neurophysiology to the mysterious point where constitutes primitive Thought & call it all the Perception. Perception & Form also exhibit Dependent Origination with neither independently real.

Interior to perceptual Neurophysiology, at early mental lever, Conceptual category is superimposed as in “this is a chair” – a radical editorial interpretation specific to the Perceiver. Like a biological *Genus* this *generalization* identifies the Perception as that of an Object *generically* identified as “chair” for instance. Concept & Perception exhibit Dependent Origination with neither independently real.

Like a biological *species* perceptual Discrimination mentally *specifies* “a red easy chair” for instance. This *specification* pinpoints somewhat within the Conceptual category, another *subjective* editorial interpretation. Discrimination & Concept exhibit Dependent Origination with neither independently real.

Finally Sense Thought Cognition registers, associates, & process the specified generalization but Cognition & Discrimination exhibit Dependent Origination with neither independently real. These 5 “skandhas”: Form, Perception, Concept, Discrimination, & Cognition have mediated Visual Perception of the Visual Object with Dependent Origination at the front end as well, between Form & Object. So too at the inner Subject, Dependent Origination applies to the Subject & the Cognition.

Thus 5 “skandhas” or steps in Visual Perception serially link Object & Subject by Dependent Origination with neither independently real. Consciousness illumines all that as an ephemeral reflection without establishing reality to any of it (UQND), or from another view (QND), without separation from any of it. In accord with UQND, Un-Qualified Non-Duality, pure, nondual Consciousness alone exists.

5 “skandhas” [aggregates, heaps] & Dependent Origination	
OBJECT – with, at the front end between Form & Object & at each further step – Dependent Origination [you can't have one without the other]	
(1)	Form – attributes taken to BE the Object ["chair"]
(2)	Perception – mediated Visual Perception [chair form] of the Visual Object with initial Multiplicity of Objects imposed
(3)	Concept – imposes a distinguishing <i>Genus</i> [generalization] Category [this is a "chair"] & thus further initiates Multiplicity of Objects
(4)	Discrimination – further imposes differentiation & Multiplicity of Objects [this is a RED chair]
(5)	Sense Thought Cognition – finally mediates Visual Perception of the Visual Object with Dependent Origination at the inner end, with the Subject
SUBJECT – with Dependent Origination at each step adding up to Dependent Origination across the whole between Object & Subject	



Every plane of Worldly existence has its own illusion, which can be destroyed only by another illusion on the same plane.

For example, a man takes a full meal & goes to sleep. He dreams of being hungry in spite of the food he has in his stomach. To satisfy the *Dream* hunger, he has to take *Dream* food. A wound in *Dream* requires *Dream* treatment.

A great king once dreamt that he was ill but was too poor to call a doctor. Although he had fabulous wealth in the waking state, it was of no use to him in the *Dream* state.

Similarly, the illusion of ignorance can be destroyed only by the illusion of the *Master's Grace*.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

### #5) Virtual Reality VR:

A couple of very smart characters, among many, suggest we consider the lesson of VR Virtual Reality. Cognitive Science Philosopher David Chalmers chimed in early on the past bandwagon of pointing to *The Matrix* movie as a profound parable, one far more popular than the earlier version that the cinema had emulated, Descartes *malin genie* the evil genie (or genius) entrapping the Brain in a Vat. Harder to label is the other *genie*, I mean genius, Nick Bostrom, nominally a philosopher, who offers Bayesian "proof" for the following proposition.

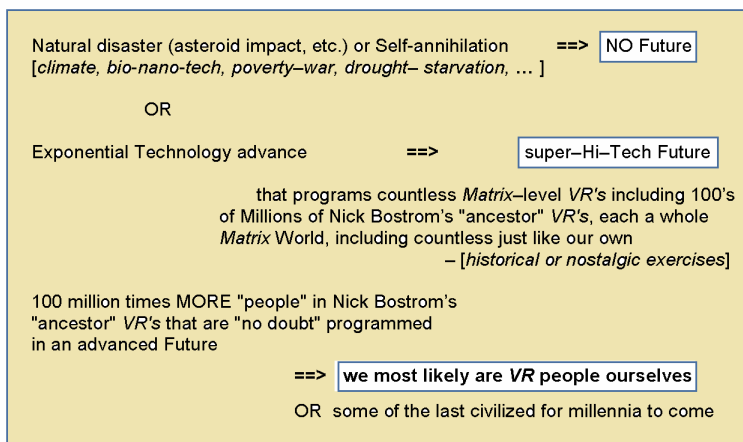
If we do not destroy our technological civilization by prompting further Climate disaster, or by war or political collapse, over-population, & so on; & if no *Armageddon*-like meteoric disaster, etc. does the deed, if none of these occur then Ray Kurzweil's elitist techno-utopia will surely come to pass. However many starve & rot with disease & violence, if some insular elite defend islands of exponentially advancing Computer technology, while escaping their own Nano-technology, Bio-technology, etc. then they will eventually program innumerable *The Matrix* level VR's Virtual Realities. Among those will likely be some "period pieces" as depicted in the movie, capturing a past version of Earth's civilization, such as the one we now find ourselves in. The most advanced VR's could pass for our own world & no one could tell the difference. So much for the *like-like* comparison between our world & all these many *particular* VR's among a far greater number of other kinds of VR. Bostrom calls those *particular* ones "ancestor" VR's because they emulate the experience of the relatively few people (~ half dozen Billions) in our world. We are those relatively "few" "ancestors". Here comes the kicker.

Those inexpensive (*by futuristic technology standards*) Virtual Reality programs will be so very numerous that for each of us now, that there might be, who knows, a Trillion more VR individuals will take the place of each of us, distributed over the man VR programs. Here Bayesian "logic" kicks in & flatly declares, that by those "odds" (*lets say*



*a Trillion to 1*) we most certainly live in one of those Future VR's right now, each of us as most likely being VR characters, or *avatars* if you will.

Now given Bostrom's claim that we probably live in & as VR right now, unless we soon destroy our civilization or experience other disastrous collapse that *will have* prevented that technology (we rarely get to use the *future perfect* tense "will have"), we turn back to David Chalmers. Putting aside the destruction scenarios, Chalmers, like many other Cognitive Science Philosophers assure us that we could never tell the difference in VR.



Our point here is that we are as good as being VR anyway, because how could we ever know? In fact our individual Waking State lives (*Dream State ones are otherwise*) actually *are* as good as VR in absolute Consciousness, no more real than that. Awakening to Identity with pure Consciousness, we are Liberated from the succession of Waking State dream-lives (& *Dream State lives as well*). Sound like fun? Maybe not, not right now. But actually all the real fun, Happiness & Love are already firmly planted in that Consciousness Reality, as is our Being & Identity already.

Man is always the **Self** & yet he does not know it. Instead he confounds it with the non-**Self**, body, etc. Confusion is due to ignorance. If ignorance is wiped out, the confusion will cease to exist & the true **Knowledge** will be unfolded.

*selection from* Sri Ramana Maharshi

## #6) Dimension Games:

Brian Greene's *garden hose* analogy for "compactified" *String Theory* dimensions represents one of the recent versions of the contemplation below; Edwin Abbott's *Flatland* included an older one. However ancient, the exercise remains worthwhile.

If our "robust" reality were compared to a 1-D world, infinitely dense with points, all that would appear as nothing to 2-D viewer in a 2-D realm that contained our 1-D linear world. Viewing our 1-D Line broadside, the 2-D viewer cannot make out the

infinitesimally thin Line with zero thickness in his 2-D world. Should he take the Time-dimension out of our 1-D Space-Time continuum, the 2-D view would try to examine a cross-section, a completely invisible 0-D Point bereft of both thickness or 2-D Area, & also bereft of even any 1-D Length.

That 2-D viewer, proud of the Area of his world might be shocked to hear from a 3-D viewer examining his world *on edge* & finding it to be a simple 1-D Line of no Area & certainly no Volume. The 2-D Space-Time continuum at any moment is a 1-D cross-section of the same sort, with no Area or Volume.

To capture some sense of a 4-D viewer's experience, we might imagine that the 3-D World he views is some kind of Cube, like the planet *Bizarro Superman* came from. We can finish it at these dimensions, even though extending the speculation into higher *compactified* or other higher dimensions would be obvious enough. In passing we could note how we have analogized the way an *M-brane* "views" a *String*, or how higher-D *p-branes* "view" those.

1-D Line *on edge* appears as a 0-D Point [with a "concealed"] Dimension  
2-D Plane *on edge* appears as a 1-D Line [with a "concealed"] Dimension  
3-D Space *on edge* appears as a 2-D Plane [ ~ a Hologramic Universe]  
4-D Space-Time *on edge* appears as a 3-D Space [ ~ our World] etc.

But anyway, the 4-D viewer addressing the *Bizarro World* Cube might redirect the cubistic 3-D viewer from his Solid Volume to the volume-less Area of a single Surface. Appreciating that Surface, the 4-D viewer further humiliates his listener with consideration of the infinitesimally thin & sharp zero-Area of a single 1-D cubic Edge. Alas, diminished further is the focus down to a 0-D corner. Negligible are these Forms revealed to be, from a perspective of 3-D Space, never mind 4-D Space-Time. Every Moment of Time in 4-D Space-Time captures a 3-D World cross-section of no 4-D Volume, no "substance", no reality so-to-speak.

Likewise, our own physical Forms & Mental Images are like surfaces & edges of no extent in the infinite-D *Space* of absolute Consciousness. So much less significant are the "corners", the 0-D individual Ego's crying out for recognition in empty space. Consciousness embraces all & yet all things & individuals are as nothing in the infinite dimensions of Consciousness. Fortunately, we are not things, nor are we individuals. "Each" of can know irrefutably that he/she is actually Consciousness itself.

The thought, "I have not realized", the expectation to become realized, & the desire of getting anything, are all the workings of the Ego.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

## #7) Perception & Inquiry:

*To expect the Perceptions of form, World, Body, Senses, & Thought to disappear at their own level in order to transcend them is like expecting the Dream character in as Dream to see Dream forms, World, Body, Senses, & Thought disappear within that Dream before waking up.*

Master Nome mandala 8

As stated above, awakening to one's True Identity does not essentially entail opening of the sky, blazing lights, hallucinations, or thought-free Nirvikalpa Samadhi, necessarily. Such temporary experiences can occur & the last one can be extremely helpful. Awakening to one's True Identity results from ceaseless Self-Inquiry, with full penetration, seeking to know by direct experience: "Who am I". Any other Thought or Perception should prompt the auxiliary question: "For whom is this thought?" "For me." "Who am I?" Find where the thought "I" arises, find that Consciousness, you very sense of Existence to be the "place" where the thought "I" could never arise. Abide as that Existence-Consciousness.

Be what you are. All that is necessary is to lose the **Ego**. That which is, is always there. Even now you are that. You are not apart from it.

selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi

## #8) Self-Inquiry follow-up::

*"ceaselessly inquire, with full penetration"*    from Master Nome's mandala on Self-Inquiry

Taking the last part first, a quick caution on "full penetration." Meant as a mental effort, that's just fine, but not the highest way to understand that advice. For instance, a yoga student might have the good intention of visualizing some "3<sup>rd</sup> eye" with "full penetration" as mental mechanism, an effort of will for "someone" to reach or attain "something" or some "place." Higher might it be to view "through" some subtle "3<sup>rd</sup> eye" but neither resembles the "full penetration" alluded to in the quote above. In that other sense, there is no duality of "someone" & "something", no objective mechanism at all, however subtle or mental. The "full penetration" here is a non-objective "inter-penetration" of that Nondual Reality, an "inter-penetration" of Identity with That. More light is shed on this in what follows.

The "ceaselessly inquire" first part could again be admirably interpreted as repeated strong intention, with intense desire for Self-Realization. When any other Perception or Thought distracts, as stated previously, ask interiorly: "For whom is this thought or perception?" "For me." "Who am I?" is the Self-Inquiry prompt made subjectively "with full penetration" beyond the verbal & any other mental level. Find the place where the *pre-thought* Notion "I" could seem to arise, but actually never does arise. That is pure Existence, vast Consciousness, the Nondual Self. Abide there "ceaselessly", with repeated effort fine, but better by identification with what is naturally "ceaseless". That is your

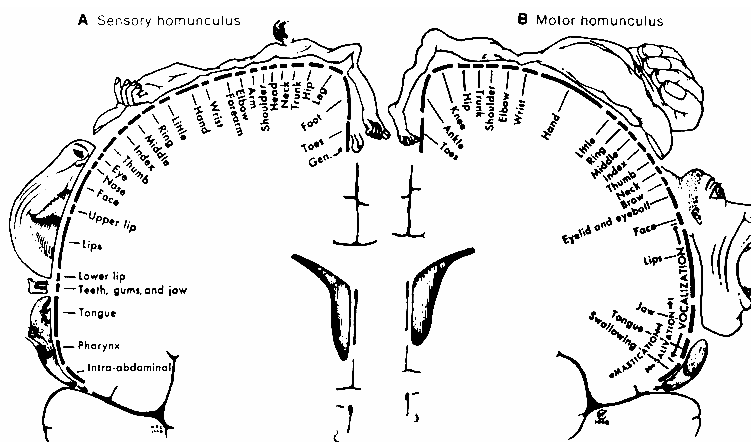
unwavering sense of Existence – we always know that we exist. Moreover, as we always "know" that Existence, also "ceaseless" is the Knowledge which is Consciousness. Identification with Existence–Consciousness, this is what is already, naturally "ceaseless". Self-Inquiry continued from the deep basis of conscious Knowledge one's own Existence, that is "ceaselessly inquire, with full penetration."

The degree of the absence of concepts is the measure of your progress towards Self-realization. But Self-Realization itself does not admit of progress, it is ever the same. The Self remains always in Realization. The obstacles are concepts. Progress is measured by removal of obstacles to understanding that Self is always realized. So thoughts must be checked by seeking to whom they arise. Go to their source & they will not arise.

selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi

## #9) Homunculus:

The term *homunculus* or "little man" is most popularly associated with the cartoon diagram sketched across a coronal cross-section of the Brain either anterior to the Central Sulcus (c. fissure, fissure of Rolando) – Motor, or posterior to the Central Sulcus (c. fissure, fissure of Rolando) – Sensory. This scheme locates anterior pre-Motor control in the pre-central gyrus on Left & Right sides, in the of the Frontal Lobes. The similar *homunculus* for the primary somesthetic Sensory cortex spans the posterior post-central gyrus on Left & Right sides, in the of the Parietal Lobes. Neither is the *homunculus* we most want to talk about, but we can make these work too.



The older meaning of *homunculus* classically describes the "mental being" in Descartes "theater of the mind" who operates the sensory controls, much like Tony Randall & Burt Reynolds in the last vignette of Woody Allen's *All You Ever Wanted to Know About Sex*. The movie characters operated motor controls as well. When used disparagingly, as in a *mere homunculus*, by those unsympathetic to Descartes Dualism, they indicate a fantastic

(in a bad sense) invention plucked out of mid-air as a weak instrument of argument. That is how I use the term *homunculus*. Furthermore, though personally sympathetic to Descartes overall point, I do heap on additional opprobrium to this term *homunculus* & this where the Motor-Sensory cartoons mentioned above come into use here.

One new to Neuro-anatomy might be overly impressed with the Motor-Sensory *homunculi* diagrams, as useful as they are. Such a reader might come away with an exaggerated confidence that these details "explain everything" about the topics. In any given case where I would levy the label *homunculus* a body of scientific detail would be innocently, or not so innocently piled on to "win" an argument by sheer mass or sophistication of detail that may not be sufficiently relevant to actually prove the point implied. Within Neuro-anatomy itself, another case would be detailed diagrams of Eye structure, Retinal cellular detail, optical nerve tracts & nuclei & so on. The reader might be so impressed as to forget that the implied "explanation" of Perception fails to be there amid all that detail. This amounts to, intentional or not a "snow job", "red herring", or whatever be the favorite cliché.

Other examples that I would playfully label as *homunculus* abound in Scientific Realism around topics like *String & Brane Theory*, the *Multi-verse & Anthropic Landscape*, etc. The detail is more "fantastic" (in both senses of the word) than Descartes "little man" but "robust" Mathematics does not in itself prove Reality. Instead of "bah, humbug", I say "*homunculus*."

When one daily practices more & more abiding in the heart, the Mind will become extremely pure due to the removal of its defects, & the practice will become so easy that the purified Mind will plunge into the heart as soon as the Inquiry is commenced.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

## #10) Homunculus 2:

Before picking on the same Physics as last time, let us cast down the *homunculus* label onto one other situation, among the countless that could be chosen. Cognitive Science Philosopher, David Chalmers clearly distinguishes the *hard* problem of Consciousness from the comparatively *easy* one. Without competing with the philosophers in a contest of careful definition (for their work can be easily looked up), we can loosely typify the *easy* problem of Consciousness with explaining Perception, for instance. Heaping up a mound of detailed neuro-anatomy & physiology *does not* even answer that *easy* kind of problem of Consciousness. That *homunculus* does not *explain* Perception.

Now to pick on the Physics mentioned last time, choosing for this discussion the related inventions of the String Theory *Anthropic Landscape* & the related Multi-verse (& its predecessor – Everett's Many-Worlds Quantum Mechanics). These *fantastic homunculi* of Scientific Realism are for the most part (except for Everett's slightly different Realist

agenda), concocted for a simple reason (*bogus* I would say) which can be dumbed down to the following simplistic syllogism.

I) Anthropic Principles include overwhelming data & analysis to the effect that our Universe is an absolutely incredible coincidence, given that so-called *Anthropic* parameters are so finely tuned so as to allow the presence (even by strictly Darwinian evolution) of intelligent Life, & even just complex Life.

II) The most straightforward Ockham's Razor – friendly explanation would be recognizing some kind of "intelligence" (not necessarily fundamentalist Intelligent Design) in the "plan" of our Universe. Call it impersonal Deist Consciousness or anything else more spiritual or religious, some *intention* has to be accepted where the odds against random coincidence are like a decimal with more than five-hundred preceding zeroes before the first non-zero digit.

III) Conclusion II) is so obnoxious to Materialist Atheism that any straw must be grasped as *bias*, not the Scientific Method, rejects that Conclusion II) "out of hand" with lots of *ad hominem* name-calling to fly at anyone supporting Conclusion II). The retort *homunculus* is to postulate an improvable buffet of Universes so that picking among more than a number, again with more than five-hundred zeroes, of Universes, the *odds* are then reasonable (though not guaranteed) the one would be like ours. & our Universe must be the winner of the lottery because he we "intelligently" talking about it.

Recall if you do, that that a number with eighty zeros counts every quantum particle in our Universe. A number with "only" forty zeroes compares the diameter of an Electron to the diameter of our Universe. Adding six zeroes to any such numbers multiplies the count a Million-fold. With more than five-hundred zeroes & no provability (only "robust" Mathematics) you've got yourself a *homunculus*. That's a mighty high price in common sense & credibility, like the *Emperor's New Clothes*, to preserve by *bias* rather than Science, your precious Materialist Atheism. You yourself are quite god-like (or least sometimes act that way – just kidding), so why rule out such for the vast Universe?

When you enter the inner stillness of *Being*,  
the heart-going *Mind* is called the resting *Mind*.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

### #11) Quantum 4: Schrödinger, Bohr, Heisenberg, von Neumann:

The above mentioned were founders (*among others*) of the most successful theory in Physics, Quantum Mechanics. The brief review & quotes that follow do no typify the elected leaders of Physics today, & this is so, not because all of the above were smarter, or less intelligent than today's cutting edge. These *Four-Fathers* surpass the current breed perhaps in common horse sense, in the qualities that makes one a *mensch*, who knows – somehow more broad-minded. Mostly though, they began as atheists but did not



stay so stubbornly committed to a *biased* Scientific Materialism that they would abandon the Scientific Method & suppress all consideration of some kind of intelligent, more-than-material Universe.

Reviewing in reverse order, John von Neumann, lauded as the Father of Computer Science & by many as the smartest human of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the era of great Realists like Einstein, Feynman, etc. Along with founding a dozen major fields in Math & Mathematical Physics, von Neumann's arguments formulated the *Wigner-von-Neumann Quantum Hypothesis of Consciousness-created Reality*.

Probably the next most brilliant of the other 3, would be Werner Heisenberg of *Matrix Mechanics* & the *Uncertainty Principle*, about whom Erwin Schrödinger commented:

“While he was working on Quantum theory he went to India to lecture & was a guest of (*spiritual poet Rabindranath*) Tagore. He talked a lot with Tagore about Indian philosophy. Heisenberg told me that these talks had helped him a lot with his work in Physics, because they showed him that all these new ideas in Quantum Physics were in fact not all that crazy. He realized there was, in fact, a whole culture that subscribed to very similar ideas. Heisenberg said that this was a great help for him. Niels Bohr had a similar experience when he went to China” (*where Taoism so impressed him that when knighted in Denmark, Bohr filled the center of his Coat of Arms with the Yin-Yang symbol, rarely seen in the West back in those days*).

Heisenberg himself had said: “*Quantum theory will not look ridiculous to people who have read Vedanta.*”

Niels Bohr too would say: “*I go into the Upanishads to ask questions.*”

Eventually a member of the Vedanta Society, Erwin Schrödinger pronounced similar conclusions:

“This life of yours which you are living is not merely a piece of this entire Existence, but in a certain sense the whole; only this whole is not so constituted that it can be surveyed in one single glance. This, as we know, is what the Brahmins (*wise men or priests in the Vedic tradition*) express in that sacred, mystic formula which is yet really so simple & so clear; *Tat Tvam Asi*, That Thou Art.”

“The unity & continuity of Vedanta are reflected in the unity & continuity of Wave Mechanics. This is entirely consistent with the Vedanta concept of All in One.”

“The multiplicity is only apparent. This is the doctrine of the Upanishads & not of the Upanishads only. The mystical experience of the union with God regularly leads to this view, unless strong prejudices stand in the West.”

“There is no kind of framework within which we can find Consciousness in the plural; this is simply something we construct because of the temporal plurality of

individuals, but it is a false construction. The only solution to this conflict insofar as any is available to us at all lies in the ancient wisdom of the Upanishad.”

“Vedanta teaches that consciousness is singular, all happenings are played out in one Universal Consciousness & there is no multiplicity of selves. The stages of human development are to strive for Being (*Moksha*). *Nirvana* is a state of pure blissful knowledge. It has nothing to do with individual. The Ego or its separation is an Illusion.”

“Vedanta teaches that Consciousness is singular, all happenings are played out in one Universal Consciousness & there is no multiplicity of selves.”

Schrödinger's biographer summarized as follows: “Vedanta are beliefs likely to appeal to a Mathematical Physicist. Such factors may help to explain why Schrödinger became a believer in Vedanta. In 1925, the World View of Physics was a model of the Universe as a great machine composed of separable interacting material particles, During the next few years, Schrödinger & Heisenberg & their followers created a Universe based on superimposed inseparable Waves of Probability Amplitudes. This new view would be entirely consistent with the Vedantic concept of the All in One.”

Schrödinger expressed very clearly the sense that Consciousness is a unity, arguing that this “insight is not new. From the early great Upanishads the recognition *Atman* = Brahman (the personal self equals the omnipresent, all-comprehending eternal Self) was in Indian thought considered to represent, the quintessence of deepest insight.

Schrödinger explicitly affirmed his conviction that Vedantic *jnana* (Knowledge) represents the only true view of Reality.

When unity is replaced by a variety of perceived phenomena, it's called outgoing *Mind*.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

## #12) Nuclear Four-Fathers, or at least one of them:

Robert Oppenheimer, father of the Hydrogen bomb, learned Sanskrit & read Indian scriptures in the original, describing them as the most influential books to shape his philosophy of life.

“The *Vedas* are the greatest privilege of this century.”

Yes the West was getting greater access to Indian spirituality, as in the vast body of primeval inspiration & instruction – the *Vedas*. The final or "end of" the *Vedas* is the *Vedanta* that includes Nonduality. Those books were the *Upanishads*. The shortest & most focused of these might have been the *Mandukya Upanishad*. Gaudapada Mahanta's *Karika* on that *Upanishad* is the source-book for the most nondual *Vedanta*, the *Ajatavada* school. Work. Sri Shankara's *Bhashya* on that *Karika* on that *Upanishad*



elaborated the terse content of Gaudapada who was the guru of Shankara's guru. Shankara's own disciple Suresvara wrote a *Vartikka* on that *Bhashya* on that *Karika* on that *Upanishad*, & that *Vartikka* further expanded the details. Our point is that in 6 steps Veda-Vedanta-Upanishad-Karika-Bhashya-Vartikka the essential Truth has been available in the West by the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, but Oppenheimer was grateful for the larger & older Vedas as the West's "greatest privilege of this century."

As prime source "revealed" scripture *Sruti*, the *Upanishads* & selected "remembered" *Smriti* constituted original *Vedanta*. Quoting the greatest of those original *Smriti*, the Bhagavad Gita Oppenheimer uttered:

*"Now I am become death, the destroyer of worlds."* (not originally a Silver Surfer quote)

Know that the **Consciousness** always shines as the formless **Self**, the true "I".  
Your duty is to be, & not to be this or that.  
All required is to realize the **Self** is to be still.  
Since the **Self** is not now understood to be **Truth**, the one **Reality**.

selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi

### #13) Nikola Tesla, an Electro-Magnetism Four-Father.

The Serbo-Croatian mastermind Nikola Tesla, immigrant to the U.S., is the true father of the Electrical Age. He too was a vegetarian who used Sanskrit words. Fascinating lore, including his tragic betrayals he suffered & his extreme idiosyncrasies that seemed to attract those betrayals, make fascinating reading. But here we just make a partial list of some of his creations & inventions, some exploited & developed by others who thus made fortunes that Tesla never enjoyed. Starting with a few poorly defined entries, such a list proceeds as follows:

- 1) a radio-operated, unmanned torpedo submarine offered to & rejected by the U.S. Navy because hitherto there had been no submarines, torpedoes, or radio.
- 2) *an ability to hold & brightly illuminate with his bare hand a fluorescent light bulb with no apparent wires or power source (still no one knows how).*
- 3) a scheme to make all vehicles electrical, drawing power from a charged crust of the Earth, through a trailing contact wire, dragged behind the vehicle. Upon slowing or stopping all these vehicles would reverse motors to generators & pump, as much as possible, the kinetic energy acquired, transformed back as electrical energy back into the Earth from which it had been drawn. Meters on each vehicle would monitor energy drawn & energy returned to balance credits for the user. The system would be largely an "honor" system of metering & keeping up with the clean energy debts.
- 4) *a similar scheme to store mechanical vibrational energy into the Earth's crust for use & return, like the electrical energy. This "mad scientist" (he was the original, after Dr. Frankenstein) experiment was stymied when resonant & seismic vibrations brought down his Lab & nearby buildings at its Times Square location. The principle of Resonant frequency which he first mastered was his undoing that time.*

- 5) the first SETI-type project, in his case, sending radio transmissions into deep Space & receiving the same back, such as the uncanny rhythm he optimistically mistook for Alien contact – only he had instead partially discovered *Pulsars* without the Astrophysics to understand his finding.
- 6) the "ultimate weapon" a Proton-ray cannon that he claimed could eliminate aircraft from 200 miles, the first Star-Wars project, which he hoped would end all war – the F.B.I took his places apart down to the splinters upon his death, but no one ever found or knows if he really had such a design.
- 7) a plan to furnish unlimited clean free energy to all (non cold fusion) but supposedly a harnessing of the vast Zero Point Energy Field of the Vacuum.
- 8) more routine inventions like : AC, Alternating Current
- 9) the electric motor
- 10) the electric generator, include the hydro-electric dam at Niagara Falls. New York's first electrical energy source
- 11) Radio, the source of Marconi's design
- 12) early TV & computer hardware
- 13) practical production of X-rays
- 14) primitive transistors
- 15) Neon & other Fluorescent lighting
- 16) 50's *sci-fi* favorite – the Tesla coil
- 17) arc lighting in general
- 18) wireless scramblers & encryption technology
- 19) remote control (in addition to his rejected submarine)
- 20) wireless power transmission
- 21) telegeodynamic searching for minerals, for beach-combers & Mining companies alike
- 22) the Tachometer
- 23) the Speedometer
- 24) the Refrigerator
- 25) bladeless turbines (before Mazda & the Wankel engine)
- 26) Cryogenics
- 27) jet-driven dirigible blimp Hovercraft precursors to Harrier jets & Osprey helicopters

The Truth of your **Self** alone is worthy to be scrutinized & known. Taking it as the target of your attention, you should keenly seek to know it in your spiritual heart. This knowledge of yourself will be revealed only to the **Consciousness** which is silent, clear & free from the activity of the agitated & suffering **Mind**.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

### #14) Reality-break:

The *argumentum ab auctoritate* – Argument from Authority is considered a Fallacy in the context of Induction Reasoning, but otherwise by Deductive Reasoning. If the "authority" is beyond reproach or any doubt, then the appeal to authority is as valid as the authority itself. The reader may not count his or herself a fan, but the medieval Indian sage, Sri Shankara has been esteemed as just such an authority by some Billion people over the course of history.

Whether that's good enough or not, we note a single line from his *brahma jnana vali mala*, a title translated poetically as the *Rows of the Garlands of Brahman Knowledge*. The 1<sup>st</sup> line of the 20<sup>th</sup> verse reads: *brahma satyam jaganmithya jivo*, which translates as: *Brahman is the Truth, the Universe is false*.

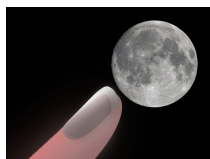
Whatever might be indicated, especially say oneself, the One Self, can only be Brahman, the Absolute Reality. All else, down to every thought & moment, is unreal.

Whenever you are disturbed by thoughts you need merely withdraw within to the **Self**. This is not concentration or destruction of the **Mind** but withdrawal into the **Self**.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

### #15) Finger Pointing to the Moon:

"Finger Pointing to the Moon" refers to the old cliché or analogy, often depicted as a parent pointing to the Moon with his or her forefinger. Generally a dog will look at the Finger & not at the Moon indicated. The same is true for a young enough child. Adults who ever do the same don't have the same excuse.



The small example that follows could as easily been any of countless other instances where the audience is "not getting the point." Take the Copenhagen Interpretation of

Quantum Mechanics, specifically in the sense of Wigner–von-Neumann "Consciousness–created" Reality. What is or is not happening for an involved quantum particle may just be the "Finger" for a Philosopher, even if it be the "Moon" for a Physicist.

For those for whom their emphasis is a Quantum Theory as the "Moon", they reasonably enough are interested, perhaps as Physicists. in the quantum particle & do well to argue for other interpretations they favor. But when the given example scenario serves as only a "Finger", as might be the case for a Philosopher, the quantum particle may not be of great interest & the Copenhagen Interpretation of Quantum Mechanics, Wigner–von-Neumann "Consciousness–created" Reality may be the "Finger" & not at all the "Moon" indicated.



*attend to the Moon pointed to, not the Finger*

The success of the Copenhagen Interpretation of Quantum Mechanics, Wigner–von-Neumann "Consciousness–created" Reality is certainly adequate enough to suggest that the role of the Observer & the possible functioning of Consciousness are topic worth further study. So it is, regardless are alternative interpretations & all the quantum particles there might be, the Theory is a "Finger" pointing to the "Moon" of those Observer & Consciousness topics, without the burden of necessarily "proving" anything at that initial stage. Instead of "evidence", we can borrow from the legal meaning of that word & promote the Theory, the Finger as a "lead" that should be rigorously followed–up, without front-loaded *bias* Pro or Con.

The *Consciousness* issue might be taken up at a later date, but that side is problematic in that a hundred Scientists & Philosophers arguing the topic will advocate a hundred at-least-slightly different meanings for Consciousness. Instead, for the moment, we let the Theory be a "Finger" pointing to the "Moon" of possible Observer–involvement. Science traditionally will Objectively face the Mind outward to a presumed *RWOT* Real World Out There. The Observer is assumed to be an inconsequential, inert & irrelevant element in the picture. However that shakes out in one theory in Physics or another, we quickly take up the same question on a different, *common sensical* level, *folk psychology* or whatever if you like.

*Virtual Reality* provides a potent model for efficient "objective content". Driving a highway in *VR*, distant trees we see off the road need not be programmed with detailed leaf count & leaf structure. At a distance where we can only see "lollipop" trees, *VR* can efficiently leave the detail at that as well. In fact, at some intermediate range, we may see "leaves" where still only "lollipop" trees are possible, that superimposition due to visual "filling-in" of false detail by the Mind, or Brain if you like. Likewise, passing drivers in an opposing traffic lane can have mere "lollipop" faces at even short distances from us,

due to the speed in which they whiz by. Overall, VR, even at *The Matrix*-like level need not program an entire Universe, but an evolving tableau of what we do see at any instant.

Just so, the same is true for Berkeley's "Subjective" Idealism (*which characteristically attracts foul-language comments on the Internet*). & the same is so for the Quantum Idealism of the Copenhagen Interpretation of Quantum Mechanics, Wigner-von-Neumann "Consciousness-created" Reality. But like Consciousness itself, we dodge that issue for now after making the VR analogy of limited fabrication being sufficient to fool us into accepting a *RWOT*.

One salient characteristic of the smaller "fabrication" needed is that every Objective item is "for Me", is referenced to me. Be it hot or cold, good or bad, that appraisal is "for Me". So it goes with big or small, near or far, & so on, it is all so "for Me". Perceptions are all made "by Me" & "for Me". Every visual perspective seen for an Object is referenced to the Location of my eyes. So it goes for all Objective qualities & all the more so internal attitudes we hold. All of the limited "fabrication" that one can attest to at a given moment is referenced to the Observer, to Me, the Individual. Back to the Tree in the Forest.

If no one is in the Forest, who can say a tree was falling at such & such a time, making such & such a sound? Circumstantial evidence only could be claimed for the already fallen tree, but this too must be verified by an Observer, even if only the Observer later viewing some movie documentary capturing of the "fall" on film. Noting the inextricable participation of the Observer (*even if not "participation" in the John Archibald Wheeler sense*) is "Moon" enough for the "Finger" of Quantum Mechanics. Transcending the fabricated *RWOT* comes about by Self-Inquiry into the identity of that Observer, Individual, Ego. Finding that no such ever came to be is the Liberation of Self-Knowledge. If any theory of Quantum Mechanics can help to achieve that, such is "Moon" enough for Quantum Idealism of the Copenhagen Interpretation of Quantum Mechanics, Wigner-von-Neumann "Consciousness-created" Reality, or any other worthy "Finger" pointing the "Moon" of Reality.

The **Mind**, turned outwards, results in thoughts & objects. Turned inwards, it becomes itself the **Self**. To ask the **Mind** to kill the mind is like making the thief the policeman. He will go with you & pretend to catch the thief, but nothing will be gained. So you must turn inward & see from where the **Mind** rises & then it will cease to exist.

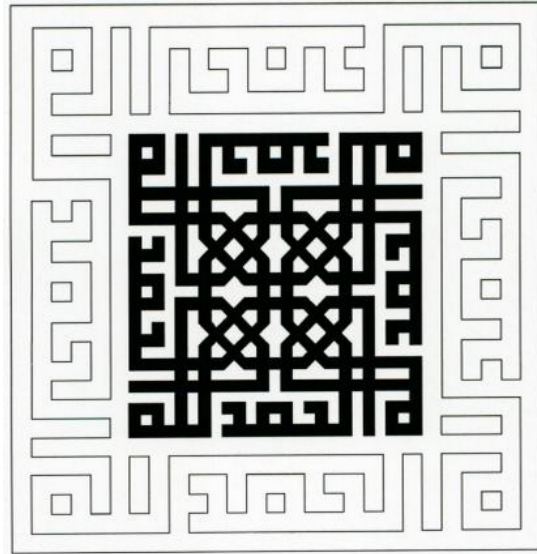
*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

## #16) Sufi Nonduality:

The *Void* is a *mirror*; Creation is the Image in it.  
Man is as the *eye* of the Image reflected in the *mirror*;  
the *One* who is reflected in the Image is hidden in the

*pupil of that eye. Thus He sees Himself.*

(Muhyiddin) Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn al-'Arabī al-Ḥātīmī aṭ-Ṭā'ī "Shaik of all Shaiks" 13<sup>th</sup> century Andalusian Sufi QND mystic as published in his account from a UQND Shaik. [UQND Un-Qualified Non-Duality is Advaita Ajatavada; QND Qualified Non-Duality]



The above quote (a similar *mirror* image is found in the Ashtavakra Gita) is a small part of *The One Alone*, also published as *Whomsoever Knoweth Himself* (knows God, as quoted from the Quran). Without mentioning this text, the more typical QND of Ib'n Arabi, acquaintance of Averroes & Jallaluddin Rumi, has been much promoted (*along with so many other topics*), by the contemporary Turkish philosopher-publisher, Adnan Oktar. He takes his pen-name from 2 biblical prophets "dedicated" to increase in faith: namely brother of Moses, Aaron (*Harun*) & John (*Yahya*) the Baptist. Yahya publicly disavows the above-quoted UQND teaching of *Wahdat al-Wujud* (Unity of Being), just as he follows George Berkeley in disavowing pure *Subjective Idealism*. Like Berkeley, Yahya holds to the World as a mental Dream, placed however in the Mind by God.

As extra insurance against being labeled with too much Non-Duality, Irish Anglican Bishop George Berkeley (for whom the California city & university are named), further re-injected an unknowable *RWOT* real-world-out-there that we never touch, but "really" created, just in case.

It is with the inward-going Mind that you eliminate the outward-going Mind. You do not set about saying there is a Mind & I'm going to kill it, but you seek the source of the Mind. Then you will find that the Mind does not exist at all.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*



## #17) Heart Sutra:

In a prior section we've seen a non-traditional interpretation of the 5 "*skandhas*" (*factors of perceptual knowledge, that is, apparent experience of a World*)

We've also seen the acme of Nonduality, *Ajativada Advaita*, the Teaching of "No Creation" in Gaudapada's *Karika* & almost identically found in Nagarjuna's *Madhyamika* Buddhism. The same appears in an abbreviated adaptation of the Buddhist *Heart Sutra*.

*Arya Bhagavati Prajnya Paramita Hirdaya*

Exalted One, the Lady of Conquest, the Sutra on the Heart of the Perfection of Wisdom

The Conqueror saw perfectly that the 5 *skandhas* (*factors of perceptual knowledge, that is apparent experience of a World*) were empty of any nature, any essence of their own.

Your Body is empty; emptiness is your Body.

Emptiness is nothing but your Body, & your Body is nothing but emptiness.

The same is true of your feelings, & your ability to discriminate between things, & the other factors that make you up, &

all the different kinds of awareness that you possess: all of them are empty.

Every existing thing is emptiness. Nothing has any characteristic of its own. Nothing ever begins.

Nothing ever ends. Nothing is ever impure. Nothing ever becomes pure.

Nothing ever gets less, & nothing ever becomes more.

With emptiness there is no Body. There are no feelings. There is no ability to discriminate.

There are none of the other factors that make you up, & there is no awareness.

There are no eyes; no ears; no nose; no tongue; no Body; no Mind; nothing to see;

nothing to hear; nothing to smell; nothing to taste; nothing to touch; & nothing to think of.

There is no part of you that sees. There is no part of you that is aware of what you see; &

this is true all the way up to the part of you that thinks, &

the part of you that is aware that you are thinking.

There is no misunderstanding your World. There is no stopping this misunderstanding, &

the same is true all the way up to your old age &

your death, & to stopping your old age & your death.

There is no suffering. There is no source of this suffering.

There is no stopping this suffering. There is no path to stop this suffering.

There is no knowledge. There is nothing to reach. & there is nothing not to reach.

Sages have nothing to reach; & because of this,

they are able to practice the Perfection of Wisdom, & stay in this Perfection of Wisdom.

This frees them of every obstacle in their Minds, & this frees them from all fear.

They go beyond all wrong ways of thinking, & reach to the ultimate end of *Nirvana*.

All the Enlightened Beings of the Past, Present, & Future too follow this same Perfection of Wisdom, & thus bring themselves to perfect Enlightenment: to the matchless state of a totally enlightened Buddha.

*Gate, gate, para-gate, parasam gate, bodhi svaha.*

Gone, gone, gone beyond, beyond the beyond, all hail the traveler!

All that you need do is to find out the origin of the "I-thought" & abide there. Your efforts can extend only thus far. Then the beyond will take care of itself.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

### #18) Idealist Perception:

An *Idealist* had a Thought but didn't know what it was made of. It showed up, & then it was gone. It was *who knows where?* – in his "Mind" supposedly, whatever that was. What the Mind was & was made of, what the Thought was & was made of, he had not the slightest understanding. A Sage told him both Thought & containing Mind were fleeting illusions in Consciousness. The *Idealist* would have to look into that. Meanwhile, he followed the trail of what the Thought was a *thought of*. It was a Thought of a Chair, but the *Idealist* could not touch the Chair, see the Chair, or know about it any other way. All the *Idealist* had to go on was the Thought of Chair, a Thought of its appearance, a Thought of what it felt like, but only just those thoughts, whatever they were. The *Idealist* could never directly contact the Chair of anything else, or anyone else – nor the Sage, nor anyone else. All he ever experienced were mysterious Thoughts, including thoughts about those thoughts, saying the original Thoughts were of Sense experience, Sense experience of a World & so on. But all the *Idealist* experienced were Thoughts. But then there was the Sage who assured him all the experience was fleeting appearance in Consciousness. So was the *Idealist* himself, so was the Sage. But the Sage did admit that his suggestion were Truth, Truth verified by direct Knowledge of thousands of men & women (a few children), all Sages who knew that they & all else were Consciousness. They *knew* by directly being Consciousness without any World, bodies, *Idealists*, others, Thoughts, or anything else but Consciousness. Go figure.

The Mind is only a bundle of thoughts. How can you extinguish it by the thought of doing so, or by a desire? Your thoughts & desires are part & parcel of the Mind. The Mind is simply enhanced by new thoughts rising up. Therefore it is foolish to attempt to kill the Mind by means of the Mind. The only way of doing it is to find its source & hold on to it. The Mind will then fade away of its own accord.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*



## #19) Unity of Consciousness:

"Unity of Consciousness" is an expression used by Immanuel Kant & others in ways both similar & different from what follows here. Erwin Schrodinger, who formulated Quantum Wave Mechanics, dabbled in pop-Philosophy in his later Vedanta Society days. What is Life? What is Mind? Such were questions he addressed in small monographs. The gist of his own "Unity of Consciousness" discussion began with the assertion that plural or multiple Consciousness has *never* been experienced by anyone at any time.

Extreme examples, without concern for the validity of the scenario, include multiple-personality disorders. Even there, *only one* Personality at a time seemed to be the subject's experience. In Dream, daydream, hallucination, & ordinary Waking State life, we only feel that we have or are *one Consciousness* at a time.

With Trillions of cells, those who identify themselves with a Body, do so as a unified Consciousness without conflict between one Body system & another. The more cosmic view holds to *only one* Consciousness period.

While ordinary Life may seem less relevant in that perspective, what attention there is given to daily Life is marked by effortless harmony, a kind of small, quiet perfection. The one Consciousness reflected in the cinema-play or daily Life or Dream is traditionally said to be saturated with the *good, the true, & the beautiful*. Strongly individuated, Egoistic life is said to be marked with selfish greed & perhaps even cruelty, representing lack of the *good, the true, & the beautiful*.

To wage war, violence, exploitation, selfish greed, ..., is seen from the viewpoint of one Consciousness to be like feeding the muscle of a right arm by amputation, roasting, & eating one's left arm (*though such supposedly has happened is some desperate situations*).

In any case, toward the ultimate truth of one Consciousness, the failure to find, on any level, split or multiple Consciousness was treasured by Schrodinger as a tell-tail hint of the broader truth.

In most languages, a single word, often a single syllable, in English, a single letter becomes the universally shared "name" for that one Consciousness. Each refers to that Consciousness as "I".

The Ego-Self appears & disappears & is transitory, whereas the real Self is permanent. You wrongly seem to identify the real Self with the Ego-Self. See if that mistake has come about. The Ego-Self does not exist at all. To whom is the trouble ? The trouble also is imagined. Trouble & pleasure are only for the Ego. Take care of yourself. Let the World take care of itself. See your Self. If you are the Body there is the gross World also. If you are spirit all is spirit alone. Do it yourself 1<sup>st</sup> & then see if the question of others arises afterwards.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

## #20) Hypothetical deleted scene from The Matrix:

*Cypher:* So Mouse, let me tell ya, this meeting I had with the Architect, like wow! He had more monitor screens than I knew even existed. He's on top of all of it.

*Mouse:* What were you doing, talking to the machines, Cypher?

*Cypher:* Oh, ah nothin' special, just a little agreement I had to work out. Anyway, I got a peak at the core programs upon which *The Matrix* is coded, & man how *robust* & consistent! I see now for sure how that religious prophecy nonsense & all that is unnecessary & just wrong. Intelligent guys like the Architect have it all figured out, there's no need for any God in this *Matrix*, it's all Science!

*Mouse:* Yeah, but just how does Mathematical *robustness* & consistency *prove* anything about our *Matrix* Universe & whether it's purely Mechanistic, you know – Materialist or Physicalist Scientific Realism & all that?

*Cypher:* 'Cause all that sophisticated Math would not be needed by some Divine Force or Consciousness that could just wave a *magic wand* & poof, make the whole show by some Creation, some Intelligent Design.

*Mouse:* I don't get it Cypher. Why couldn't some divine Consciousness weave all this *Matrix* from infinitely complex patterns, the merest reflection from which appears like all our most *robust* Mathematics. Why not Cypher?

[*Mouse now muttering to himself after turning away from Cypher in disgust:*]

Man, that guy is as arrogant as those Machines. So proud of a little Mathematics that he concludes that we all are just Materialist machines ourselves. How does that explain Existence out of Nothing, Consciousness, self-awareness, happiness, & love, just for starters?

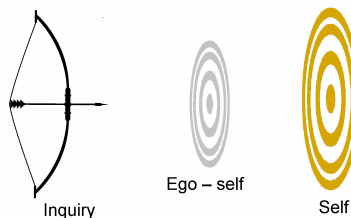
There's no goal to be reached, nothing to be attained.  
You are the **Self**. You exist always.  
No more can be predicated of the **Self** than that it exists.  
Seeing **God** or the **Self** is only being the **Self** or yourself.  
Seeing is being. You, being the **Self**,  
want to know how to attain the **Self**.  
It is something like a man being somewhere &  
asking how many ways there are to reach the place &  
which is the best way for him.  
All that is required of you is to give up the thought  
that you are this **Body** & to give up all thoughts of  
the external things or the not-**Self**.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

## #21) Striking the target though aiming at an illusory substitute:

*Even the sense "I am" is not continuous, though it is a useful pointer.*

The above is an edited statement of Nisargadatta Maharaj found in Maurice Frydman's Maharaj compilation *I am That*. Similar hints are found in the records of Ramana Maharshi. The meaning is both curious & useful. Self-Inquiry, "Who am I?" in Maharshi's teaching, or "resting in the 'I am' " for Maharaj both have essentially the same meaning, & in both that "I" or "I am" is initially believed, falsely, to be the Individual "self", the Ego.



If aware of the Reality of the Absolute Self, then Self-Inquiry can be a turning into & "abidance" in that solely existent Reality, Brahman, the Self. But most of the time, for most spiritual aspirants, the "I" that is more apparent is the Ego. In that case, the Self-Inquiry fails to find any such entity, leaving the true Absolute Self, self-revealed.

In that 2<sup>nd</sup> sense of Self-Inquiry, the inward "direction" toward the Ego is the seeking of an Illusion & not finding it. But, in addition, that inward "direction" is exactly the correct direction for the 1<sup>st</sup> meaning of Self-Inquiry, where "I" is the true Self from the onset. So "accidentally", the seeker finds the Self, though falsely looking for the Ego. Any number of silly analogies could bring home this distinction.

Some hypothetical Neolithic hunter is training his children to bring home food for the tribe (*apology to all vegetarians*). Knowing how difficult is their prey, quick, elusive small animals, & also knowing how reluctant the children are to throw spears at a living creature (*non-violence is natural*), the "hunter" advises a false strategy that will

coincidentally achieve the result. He instructs the child hunters that their objective is to still any rustling of leaves & branches by casting a spear right into the middle of the disturbance. The "rustling of leaves & branches" has no significance at all in itself, but that "direction" represents the exactly correct direction for striking the true target, the prey hidden behind & within the disturbance of the bushes. Aiming for that disturbance, their spears continue through in that right "direction" to strike the true target.

So is the Ego an illusory disturbance, posing as a "self". But the inward, subjective "direction" of that Self-Inquiry (of the 2<sup>nd</sup> sort) achieves the true result, identical to that of Self-Inquiry of the 1<sup>st</sup> sort.

People say they aren't able to know the all pervading **Self**.  
Even the smallest child says, "I exist. I do. This is **mine**."  
Everyone understands that the thing "I" is always existent.  
Only when the "I" is there, is there feeling you are the **Body**.  
Knowing one that is always visible is one's own **Self**,  
is it necessary to search with a light ?  
To say that we do not know the *atma swarupa*  
[the real nature of the **Self**] which is not different  
but which is in one's own **Self** is like saying,  
"I do not know my**self**."

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

## #22) Inner Certainty:

How can I be certain that my inner True Self is spiritual (*actually consisting of universal, Non-Dual Consciousness, not some kind of ghost or individual soul*), perfectly happy, complete, & even divine? For one assurance, there is the mutually consistent, unchanging testimony of the Wise, throughout the millennia, in disparate cultures & nations.

Closer to home, for just one more of many examples, another instance of assurance is my own interest in deeper Reality, & my own expanding ability to see & comprehend the subtle inner Truth. That drive comes from nowhere out in a "world" nor is of any service or use in such a realm.

Only the Real in me is attracted to the Real. Only the Real in me intuits, catches a glimmer of such profundity, & is capable of understanding "secret" Non-Dual Teaching in the many places it can actually be found. Seek sincerely, reject ego-messaging half-truth, & be amazed at how fast & how deeply you can comprehend & attain certainty. I can know what I am. You can know what you are. How could it be otherwise?

Sure, self-deception continues for eons, & could continue for eons more. But the façade can crumble in the blink of an eye. Let the sleeper awaken! Be at Peace, in Love, Joy, & Happiness. Every bit of fun & satisfaction was only ever on the inside anyway, however appearing to be externally prompted. Find the Reality within by the ceaseless, full-penetration Self-Inquiry: *Who am I ?*

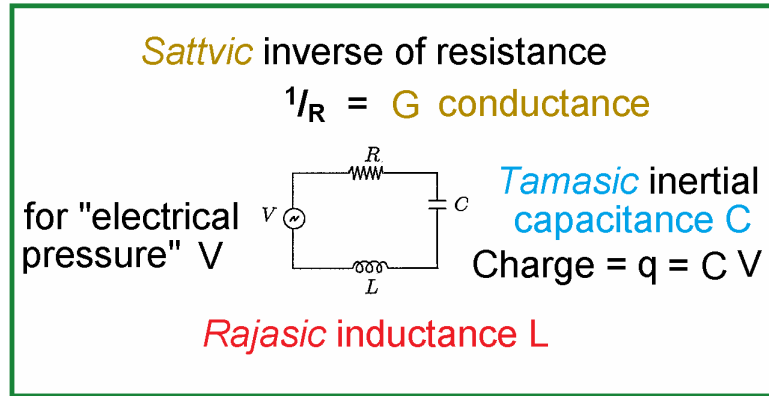
The nature of bondage is merely the rising, ruinous thought "I am different from the **Reality**".  
Since one surely cannot remain separate from the **Reality**.  
Reject that thought whenever it rises.  
You speak of **memory & oblivion** of the fullness of the **Self**.  
**Oblivion & memory** are only thought-forms.  
They will alternate so long as there are thoughts.  
But **Reality** lies beyond these.  
Memory or oblivion must be dependent on something.  
That something must be foreign to the **Self** as well,  
otherwise there would not be **oblivion**.  
That upon which **memory & oblivion** depend is the idea of the individual self.  
When one looks for it, this individual "I" is not found because it is not real.  
Hence this "I" is synonymous with Illusion or **Ignorance** [*maya*, *avidya*, or *ajnana*].  
To know that there never was **Ignorance** is the goal of all the spiritual teachings.  
**Ignorance** must be of one who is aware.  
Awareness is **jnana**. **Jnana** is eternal & natural, **ajnana** is unnatural & unreal.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

### #23) Electrical RLC Circuit Analogy:

We can abuse some simple electrical circuit terminology to sketch an Analogy for the Indian Samkhya Philosophy scheme Nature's qualities or *gunas*. Most Dualities turn out to be similar (+ / -, male / female, yang / yin, etc.). The same is true for Triads (thesis, synthesis, antithesis; etc.) such as the Samkhya *gunas*: *tamas*, *sattva*, *rajas*, simply translated for our purposes here as dull inertia, harmonious clarity, & restless rage. Practical applications of this terminology for spiritual practice are not profound but sometimes useful. To note just a couple of examples, we can first mention that Illusion or *maya* deviates from the clarity of *sattva* by splitting into dull *tamasic* "veiling" *avarana* & projecting *rajasic* superimposition *vikshepa*. First the Truth is hidden, then the False is projected & superimposed.

A second example that suffices for the moment would contrast the *sattvic* Clarity of Mind, ideal for spiritual practice with the opposite poles represented by the other 2 *gunas*. Dull inertia or *tamas* might even find a bit of an antidote in the restless energy of *rajas*, but transcending both is even better.



Simple RLC series circuit Analogy can model this interplay of the *gunas*.

The *tamasic* inertial quality can be modeled by capacitance C, such that the accumulation of *substance*, Charge is the "electrical pressure", voltage, V multiplied by this *tamasic* inertial parameter C, capacitance, or:  $q = C V$ . The same would hold for accumulated *fluid* as "capacity" times the "pressure" in a hydrodynamic or similar circuit. [*Granted we are holding several parameters constant here to force the analogy & going against the grain of many electrical analogies where readily measurable Voltage is tallied instead of Charge or Current.*]

The *sattvic* analog quality would not be resistance, R, but rather its reciprocal, the conductance, G. such that the "flow" of Charge or Current, I, is proportional to that same "electrical pressure", voltage, V multiplied by the *sattvic* parameter G, conductance, or:  $dq/dt = I = G V$ . Again, the same would hold for *fluid flow* as "conductance" times the "pressure" in a hydrodynamic or similar circuit. We choose conductance G over the historically prior inverse concept of resistance R because the latter "negatively" impairs the "flow" while greater conductance enhances the flow.

In a electrical Phasor diagram (a specific application of a Real-axis / Imaginary axis Argand diagram) the *tamasic* C capacitance contribution is "imaginary" in the mathematical sense of being orthogonal to the "real" axis that charts the *sattvic* G conductance contribution.

In that same diagram, the *rajasic* influence is equally "imaginary" but is diametrically opposed to the *tamasic* contribution, so that the opposing effects tend to cancel each other out to some degree. Here, as with resistance R, we choose, instead of inductance L, its reciprocal, or rather the more "dynamic" reciprocal of  $\omega L$ , the inductive reactance, which paired properly with the "imaginary" number  $i$  is the inductive admittance or reciprocal of inductive impedance. This can also be related to the "imaginary" part of the total admittance, namely the inductive part of the susceptance.

In any case, the *rajasic* analog quality would not be inductance, L, but something like the inductive admittance A, such that the "rate of change of flow" ( $\sim$  acceleration of flow)  $dI/dt$ , is proportional to that same "electrical pressure", voltage, V multiplied by the

*rajasic* parameter A, admittance or:  $d^2q/dt^2 = dI/dt \sim A V$ . Again, the something similar would hold for accelerated *fluid flow* if we introduced *turbulence*, likewise a *rajasic* concept.

Confusing terminology aside, our Electrical Analogy for the 3 *gunas* gives us:

- 1) Conductance allowing "real part" free flow related to *sattva*, harmonious clarity.
- 2) *Tamas* opposed by *rajas*, akin to "imaginary" influences of Capacitance & Susceptance.
- 3) *Tamasic* Capacitance representing inertia.
- 4) *Rajasic* Susceptance corresponding to "jittery" oscillating interference, wasted motion & energy such that "the faster you try, the slower you go."

This Electrical Analogy for the *gunas* does little to model the "veiling" versus "projecting" aspects of *maya* & some other *guna* applications. But for discriminating inquiry into self-defeating qualities of Mind, like inertia & restlessness, the Electrical Analogy has some merit.

In Deep Sleep man is devoid of possessions, including his own Body. Instead of being unhappy he is quite happy. Everyone desires to sleep soundly. The conclusion is that Happiness is inherent in man & is not due to external causes. One must realize the Self in order to open the store of unalloyed Happiness.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

## #24) Inner Core:

My inner core, my Being, is the unflinching, steady, Knowledge that I exist – not some individual consciousness, but non-multiple, unformed Consciousness itself. But self-focusing on an "island" of personal ego-self-consciousness, as floating in an oceanic Universe, a *RWOT*, real – world – out – there, I cripple my innate vastness into a tiny bubble of personal identity.

The outer "*RWOT*" in the Waking State, over a short lifetime, of a century or less, occasionally holds out promise of enjoyment: sensual, emotional, & mental. For the fortunate minority that are not oppressed with desperate circumstances, almost always, there are fleeting moments when the World seems to deliver, but it all slips away, along with youth & health. The uniquely human persistence if trying & re-trying the same old sources is illustrated in the following semi-serious analogy.

*Running rats in a maze, Behaviorists find that, having found a path to the cheese, the rat will repeat that journey, even a time a or two after the cheese is no longer there. But soon, the wily small mammal gives up a lost cause & hunts instead for the cheese elsewhere. The human mammal, however, never stops going back, again & again, long after the "cheese" has vanished from that "source." Hopeless romance, unlikely gambles, & so on are among countless examples of such ever-sought "cheese".*



Our relationships solidify our survival & access to happiness, in society, in family, & other in-groups. But mistakes, wrong turns, & mis-fortune ever threaten these supports & "*all good things must end*" they say. But why?

Dream stories have similar disappointments, but turn over more rapidly, & seemingly with less rigid logic to the stories, all vanishing in a flash, come morning. Deep Dreamless Sleep is filled with a Peace that eludes us in the Waking State. Steady livelihood, stable relationships, are ever sought but all those comfort zones change & pass away eventually, if only at death when the Waking State body vanishes anyway.

Some have relatively fortunate outer circumstances, for a time, or maybe even most of a lifetime, but most do not (*in their "quiet desperation"*). No, it is within that Love & Happiness, Peace & Freedom are ever felt, found, & sourced. What appeared as temporary good luck may be revealed as God, or later Guru, & ultimately as one's own universal Self, the Reality within.

If a man thinks that his Happiness is due to external causes & his possessions, it is reasonable to conclude that his Happiness must increase with the increase of possessions & diminish in proportion to their diminution. Therefore if he is devoid of possessions, his Happiness should be nil. What is the real experience of man? Does it conform to this view?

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

### #25) Hypothetical deleted scene from the Avatar movie:

In an early skirmish with some of the construction, or rather destruction crews from Earth, the Na'vi led by their adopted "dream walker", the Marine in a Na'vi *avatar* body. Captured one the giant man-operated "robotic warrior" machines, one that the Marine's *avatar* could barely fit into, but one he soon learned to operate. With some practice he so much "became one" with the mechanism that he could sometimes forget that the huge steel structure was not his own body. Catching himself in such a lapse of mistaken identity, he pondered & worked in backwards. The steps of his logic went like this:

- 1) This huge machine with arms & legs, with me as the operating "brain" sometimes feels like my actual body, like me myself. But seeming does not make it so. I somehow entered this machine but it's not me, it's not my body.
- 2) But wait a minute! This Na'vi *avatar* is not my body either. I "dream" my way into in with that *Avatar Project* technology. The Na'vi *avatar* is not me, not by body, because when I "wake up" to my Marine body at the base, I realize the Na'vi life was like a Dream. But why stop here, how many steps back can I take this? How deep does the "rabbit hole" go?
- 3) When I ordinarily would dream at night I would "dream myself" into a Dream Body, in manner different than the *avatar* experience. But still it was a "dreaming myself" into a Dream Body, parallel to "dreaming myself" into a Na'vi *avatar* body. In either case the dream body was not me, not my body.



4) O.K., so now back another step. When I was born into what grew up to be this Marine body, was I not someone or something "entering" that human baby body. Could it be that body then & this adult Marine body now is not what I am? How far back does it go? At each of all these "embodiments", seeming does not necessarily make it so. What am I? Who am I, ultimately?

At that point his thoughts drifted back to an old, old movie. This inward inquiry reminded him of a scene in *The Matrix* movie. Morpheus & Neo were *avatars* in a VR training program & Morpheus, like a Guru, was pointing to pieces of furniture in the scene, asking Neo just how he could know the objects were real. By seeing? Hearing? Morpheus reminded Neo that Sense Perceptions were only electrical signals in the Brain. Now of course, the VR training program they appeared in was unreal throughout, Senses, Brain, objects included. & of the course *The Matrix* they had escaped from but occasionally re-entered, that too was a program & thus utterly unreal. But Morpheus & Neo left it at that, with Neo now understanding how *The Matrix* was unreal.

But the Marine remembered feeling betrayed, ripped off by the movie when they stopped the inquiry right there. The Marine recalled wondering why they didn't take the next step & question the Sense Perceptions in their so-called "real world." Weren't those Sense Perceptions also only electrical signals in the Brain? & how did anyone know about the Brain or such electrical signals? Well, only by other

Sense Perceptions that were only electrical signals in the Brain. They might not be neurosurgeons who could touch or see the Brain & so on directly, but they had to use vision & hearing to read & hear the information by which they did have some understanding of a Brain & electrical signals.

The whole thing was so circular, just like the predicament of the movie characters in the training program. So too for the Marine himself right now. However he traced back his "embodiments", all that too only came down to electrical signals in the Brain, both known by other electrical signals in the Brain. What am I? Who am I?

Of 3 classes of spiritual aspirants,  
the most advanced realize the **Self**  
as soon as they are told about its real nature.  
Those in the 2<sup>nd</sup> class need to  
reflect on it for some time before  
Self-awareness becomes firmly established.  
Those in the 3<sup>rd</sup> category usually need many years  
of intensive spiritual practice  
to achieve the goal of Self-realization.  
As a metaphor, combustion describes the 3 levels:  
gunpowder ignites with a single spark,  
charcoal needs application of heat for a short time,  
& wet coal needs to dry out & heat up  
over a long period of time before it will begin to burn.

## #26) Jagad Jiva Para:

The *Vedas* offer a number of triads, as templates for meditation, some of them resembling *Sat – Chit – Ananda*, Existence – Consciousness – some almost turned-inside-out versions of the same. Such is the case with *Jagad – Jiva – Para*, the World – the Individual – the Supreme, which can be compared to *Sat – Chit – Ananda* from the skewed perspective of an Individual. *Jagad*, the objective Universe is substituted for subjective Existence-Reality-Being-Truth or *Sat*. Consciousness, *Chit* is viewed as limited to the illusory Individual, *Jiva* (the *soul* implying identification with an individual Mind & Body). The *Ananda* perspective (not a separate *aspect*) on *Brahman*, the Absolute translates to a personal God, *Para*, the Supreme.

<p><i>Sat – Chit – Ananda</i> Existence – Consciousness – Happiness</p>
---

<p><i>Jagad – Jiva – Para</i> World – Individual – Supreme</p>
--

<p><i>Satyam – Jnanam – Anantam</i> Truth– Knowledge – Infinity</p>
---

<p><i>Satyam – Shivam – Sundaram</i> True – Good– Beautiful</p>
---

Traditional teachings will sometimes suggest that neither *Ananda* nor *Para* be the starting point for these meditations, that commencing from Existence or from Consciousness is the wiser course. Straightening out the Source of Happiness, of Bliss, or *Ananda* would best precede contemplation of that perspective so that old misidentifications & misplaced emphases not come into play. Likewise, teachers will often advise Self-Inquiry into oneself, "leaving God alone, because God can take care of itself." A related caution would be that one need never denigrate or minimize the significance of devotion to, love of, worship of God. That direction of spiritual emotion can never go wrong & will always have its own value. Such practice need never be put aside & will always augment any true spiritual practice.

One not so inclined, as might describe a Buddhist, for instance, can proceed otherwise, but dedication to God can never be wrong & always attenuates the Ego. It is said that when questioned about God, the Buddha responded with a "thunderous silence" which can mean a number of good things. Nothing need be said, such was not the emphasis at the time, see to oneself first, the Supreme would surpass all verbal description & comment, find oneself & then you will know, & so on with other interpretations being possible for that "thunderous silence". Certainly the Unborn Buddha-Mind, the

Dharmakaya, etc. held positions in Buddhist thought similar to that of God in other traditions. One takeaway again is: leave *Para* & *Ananda* be for the moment.

Backing up to *Jiva*, many meditations apply from *Who am I?* Self-Inquiry through *Tat Tvam Asi* & other *mahavakyas*, & so on. One quick comment here in relating to the *Jiva* as skewed perspective on Consciousness, *Chit*, is to scrutinize whatever version of "consciousness" might be ascribed to the *Jiva's* mental content, the apparent individual Mind. The "wisdom of man", Science both ancient & modern have no answer for Consciousness on any level. Whatever be the attenuated "consciousness" attributed to the falsely conceived *Jiva*, such does prompt the inference to cosmic Consciousness, the Non-Dual essence of the Self, *Atman*, the Absolute Reality of *Brahman*.

At the same time, nothing about the objective conception of *Jiva* explains whatever level of "consciousness" might be attributed to that Individual. Nor does Consciousness itself offer any support for the concept of a *Jiva*. The two, Consciousness & *Jiva* are mutually contradictory – both cannot be true – there cannot be any *Jiva*.

While so much more can be said, we touch briefly on the perspective that takes the objective Universe, the *RWOT* real – world – out – there to represent the subjective Existence – Being – *Sat*. Besides viewing the exactly opposite, wrong direction – not so much is it lacking as much as the inference is falsely made without foundation.

Visual "filling-in" & similar editing in all Sense Perception exemplify the way that Mind take the thinnest sliver of information (*if that much*) and infers in a giant leap of faith the entire objective picture, the whole World, the Universe. I gaze at a Hubble Telescope photo of distant galaxies, a 2-dimensional image in my hands, & I take on faith that the whole thing, the visible Universe & the greater out-of-range Universe beyond is necessarily all there. Maybe it is, maybe it is not, but how can I really know? Such is a fantastic leap of faith. I overlook the subjective inference of Consciousness from the mental play of the *Jiva* & then I glibly make this giant inference of a whole Universe from a 2-dimensional photo. If such a Universe should be, that could only be *Brahman* anyway. But as *Jiva*, I would never know.

Best is it again to start with myself. Who am I? Where does this egoic sense of "I" arise? If never found, then what true "I", what background of Consciousness remains? *Jagad Jiva Para* best points to *Sat* – *Chit* – *Ananda*, the Existence – Consciousness – Bliss which is the Absolute *Brahman*.

For the benefit of those in the top 2 categories it is taught that the Self alone exists & that it can be directly & consciously experienced merely by ceasing to pay attention to the wrong ideas we have about ourselves. These wrong ideas are collectively called the "not-Self" since they are an imaginary accretion of wrong notions & misperceptions which effectively veil the true experience of the real Self. The principal misperception is the idea that the Self is limited to the Body & the Mind. As soon as one ceases to imagine that one is an individual person, inhabiting a particular Body, the of wrong ideas collapse & are replaced by a conscious & permanent awareness of the real Self.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

### #27) Pavilion:

The parable was told, the analogy made, the image was cast into the imagination of the children this ancient tribal culture, as they listened to their princely headman. Not so much of a controlling ruler, as much as a wise leader. He attempted to expand their vision as the children beneath the Prince's tenet-top Pavilion, a vast shading fabric bordered with tassels all along the fringes.

"We see those full sizes tassels along the Pavilion edge" he pointed out, "but how significant would they seem if the fabric was to be bigger & bigger & bigger."

"See in your minds now how the fabric could be so large, vast in fact, so as to cover the known Universe."

Switching to our contemporary understanding, that known Universe can be imagined by first see a beam of Light whizzing along at 300 thousand kilometers ever second. Let the lift so soar out in Space for a minute, an hour, a year, a million years. How far would that be? Now take that so very vast distance & multiply it a million times. So would we encompass the "known" Universe & only somewhat out into the previously knowable Universe that we can be assured "is there" though out of reach due to the very limit of the speed of Light.



"That's how huge you are to see the great Pavilion 'fabric' expanded to cover an imaginable, extended Universe" said the Wiseman. Do you see it children? In your minds?"

"Now think back to those nobly embroidered tassels. See how insignificant they have become. Now expand the 'fabric' to be ultimately limitless, & surely the tassels disappear, if they hadn't already."

"Holding those images, of the 'fabric' vastness & the insignificance, the disappearance of the tassels with the vanish of any edge at all."

"Consciousness, your Consciousness, your very Being is vast like the imagined or unimaginable Pavilion fabric, with no real edges, no tassels remaining along some fringe, some edge. The tassels are like all the details of Life, of ones seemingly individual personality – all the events, words, thoughts, experiences, & physical world or even Universe in which they appear – all only insignificant, vanishing tassels along the edge, along the fringe."

"But there is no edge, no fringe for you Consciousness, for the one Consciousness. Lacking an edge, let there be torn a small rip, a separation of This from That, of Self from Other. On the edges of that imaginary rip, that false separation, let tassels again appear, as if fringe – edge tassels in themselves."

"Such is each individual Life, an imagined separation with a relatively few details, imaginary tassels – but how small, how temporary, how much of a vanishing mirage they are, at most!"

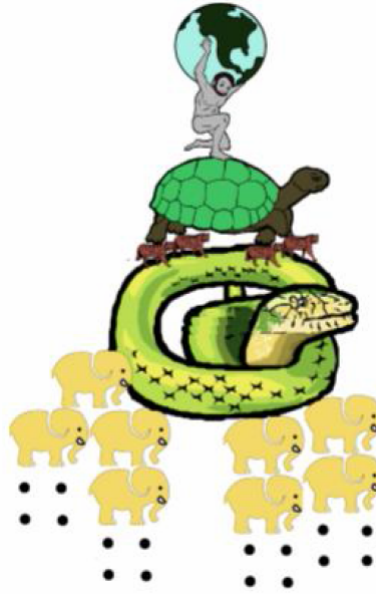
"Turn from any such tassels, such details, into the vast endlessness of the Pavilion 'fabric' of Consciousness, which is actually a very familiar place already."

"Every time you have fun, feel happy, know love, taste joy, rest in peace & contentment, you children already cruise through that endless 'fabric' of Consciousness, your real Being, your Self. The distracting mirage of passing tassels are as nothing, those details of Life. In fact the separation, the rip in the 'fabric' never really happens – all that is only a brief distracting Dream & how small those tassels anyway."

As they all sat in the shade enthralled in the parable, simply using the only large measure before them, the children were in this way guided to Wisdom within themselves.

There is no question of effort or practice. All that is required is an understanding that the **Self** is not a goal to be attained, it is merely the awareness that prevails when all the limiting ideas about the not-**Self** have been discarded.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*



### #28) William James on a hot day:

An old Urban Legend, worth repeating to make a point here, has an Indian pundit reviewing for William James, the first Psychologist, an ancient mythology of the Universe. Unfortunately they sit at mid-day without shade in one of India's hot & dry seasons. In his suit & tie, William James is verging on heat stroke, but valiantly transcribes ancient Indian mythology about the World.

Pundit: *Yes Dr. James, the great Titan (asura) like that which the Greeks called Atlas is having the entire Earth, which ancients in India & Greece knew to be a round sphere, having it all resting on his sturdy shoulders.*

Wm. James: & [what supports this Earth lifting Titan?](#)

Pundit: *Oh surely, Dr. James he stands firmly on the hard shell of a great Tortoise.*

Wm. James: & [the Turtle? Does he sink or swim?](#)

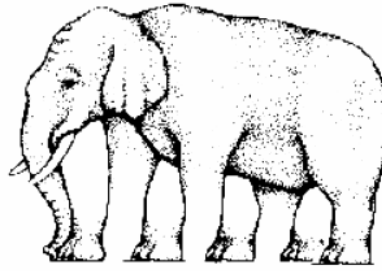
Pundit: *No, no, Dr. James the great Tortoise is poised on 4 humongous Tigers.*

Wm. James: & [kind sir, the Tigers stand on what?](#)

Pundit: *Indeed, Dr. James the 4 Tigers dig their claws onto the coils of a great Serpent.*

Wm. James, about to pass out: [Uh, ..., uh, the Snake now, how for him?](#)

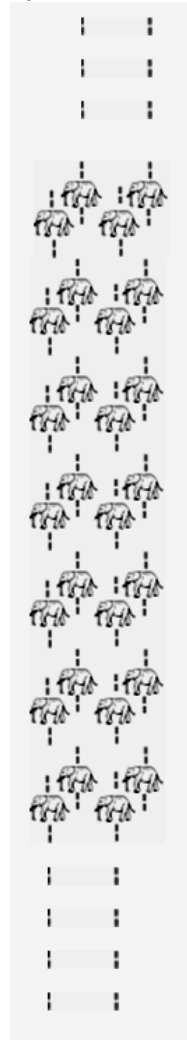




Pundit answering as the sweltering Psychologist sags in his chair: *Dr. James, I must tell, you, the Serpent is having his enormous self upheld by four giant white Elephants.*

Wm. James: (muttering about to ask the next question) ...

Pundit, either hot himself, or at the end of his tale, or fearful for the European visitor: *Oh, Dr. James, before you ask, it's white Elephants, all the way down.*



For the reader or listener to this fairly well-known tale, a vivid "following" of the elephants "all the way down" can give of quick *whiff* of the sense of Infinity. The one Non-Dual Self is said to be all that exists, & thus inexpressibly vast, while yet dimensionlessly without size or extent of any kind. Granting the sense of Time, the

beginningless & endless Eternity of the Self feels almost scary on first hearing or consideration. This spookiness is exploited by fundamentalist religions who control their members with the mindless fear of "eternal" hell. Perhaps a more "down to earth" sense of Eternity could be as follows.

No sane person wants to die, so long as Body-Identity is intact & is not modified by intractable pain or some other distressing prospect. Believing oneself to be a Body, one fears death of the Body if that implies cessation of Existence, or plummeting into some unknown afterlife. The latter aside for now, the cessation of Existence is actually not a possibility for the Self, for oneself. & so the contradiction is uncomfortable or fearful. Let's narrow it down to a more concrete, less abstract choice.

Do you want to die today (assuming none of the above-mentioned "distressing prospects")? How about tomorrow? The next day? & so on. There is no time when cessation of Existence is acceptable, so that with Body-Identification, no time when death is ordinarily acceptable. It's not so much about some abstract Eternity, as it is about now, tomorrow, the next day, & on & on, as each moment of Time seems to be experienced, one moment at a time.

But then why is cessation of Existence is not acceptable? It's because we intuitively (*correctly*) equate Existence of the Self with the blissful nature of the Self, pure Happiness itself. Even if such seems to be obscured at the moment, that goal, that natural outcome is always wanted, sought, treasured, & associated with continued Existence. On moment at a time. Eternity is never scary, but only welcome.

Perfect Bliss is Brahman.  
Perfect Peace is of the Self.  
That alone exists & is Consciousness.  
Happiness is only the Nature of Self.  
Self is not other than perfect Happiness.  
Happiness alone exists.  
Knowing that & abiding in the state of Self,  
enjoy Bliss eternally.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

### #29) Janaka & Ashtavakra:

A wandering Sage Ashtavakra, appearing as a vagrant had been abused by some citizens of the kingdom. The aged traveler was rescued when the king, Janaka extended his hospitality & protection. Later on, Janaka questioned the Sage about how "suddenly" could "sudden Enlightenment" possibly occur? In response, Ashtavakra declared that Enlightenment can happen in less time than it takes, having put one foot in the stirrup, to swing over the other leg & place the other foot in the 2nd stirrup. A bit dubious, the King continued by asking for Liberating Teaching that could result in such Enlightenment. Janaka in turn is questioned by Ashtavakra: "What customary offering will you give over

that is worthy of this gift of Liberating Instruction?” Such a gift was traditional since renunciation of the Ego would include rather than exclude lesser renunciations, such as the giving over of some valuable treasure by an aspirant capable of such a gift.

Enlightenment takes every drop of our Energy, not a bit less, but not a bit more. Any of that Energy misdirected as identification with the unreal Mind, Body, Possessions, & the rest of the World could better to be redirected toward the Supreme if one is to realize oneself to be one with that Supreme Absolute. The traditional offering made sense in the context of complete giving over of all delusion rooted in the Ego, surrendering all to the Absolute. The Guru would have no need for the offering or anything else in the World. Compassionately, he assists the disciple in complete giving over of illusory Ego identity.

As it happened, Janaka offered a succession of increasingly princely gifts. But the Sage Ashtavakra rejected each small fortune as insufficient for Janaka’s offering. Increasing & increasing the value of offered treasure, Janaka eventually felt that he must offer his entire Kingdom & to his shock & amazement, Ashtavakra accepted. But again, accepting that much, the entire Kingdom, the Sage indicates that this is still not enough. Ashtavakra sees that he the Sage has surpassed Janaka’s imagination. So he asks specifically for Janaka’s family, wife, children, & finally; & finally Janaka’s own Body & Mind. Absorbing his shock at this request for literally everything he had, Janaka remained determined & eager for Instruction, Janaka agreed & gave over ownership of all that he could call his own. Ashtavakra smiled & accepts this now complete offering.



The Sage, now ruler of the Kingdom, gives orders saddling of 2 of the former King’s horses, that are now his own. Ashtavakra then says that he needs Janaka to ride along & guide him in a survey of his newly owned kingdom. With no other words spoken, the 2 are about to ride off. Remaining otherwise silent, the Sage begins to mount up, placing his 1st foot in a stirrup to do so. But at that moment, Janaka finally lost his patience & asked: “*When do I get the Teaching ?*” Ashtavakra response was: “You have given over to me your Mind, so you have no right to ask questions.” Taking in, finally, the completeness of his Surrender, Janaka is suddenly Liberated. He notices that this has occurred in the blink of an eye, before the Sage’s 2<sup>nd</sup> swinging foot could make it into other stirrup. Amazed that the Sage’s previous prediction for *Sudden Enlightenment*

came true, but primarily grateful, in his sudden joy, Janaka thanks Ashtavakra for the most precious gift of guidance beyond all other values. Ashtavakra promptly gave back family & Kingdom, Body & Mind into Janaka's hands for "safe-keeping" Stewardship. Nominally holding all in trust for his Guru, Janaka remained thus unchanged in his relative circumstances. Absolutely, Janaka was unchanged in Renunciation, internally now, regardless of the external situation. He remained free & blissful without any Attachment or Mis-identification.

*The obstacles which hinder Realization of the Self are habits of Mind [vasanas]. Overcome the mental habits [vasanas] by realizing the Self. It is the Ego which raises such difficulties, creating obstacles & then suffering from the perplexity of apparent paradoxes. Find out who makes the Inquiries & the Self will be found.*

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

### #30) the 10<sup>th</sup>:

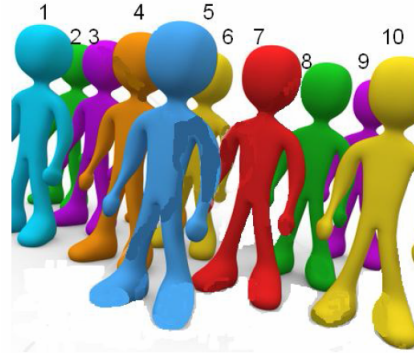
Hiking the hills & needing to cross a raging snow-fed river in Spring, 10 traveling Fools made of themselves a human chain to safeguard their passage. Given the slippery stones underfoot & unexpected high water level & onrushing force, there was natural concern that they all had made it the other shore. The first one to think of it began a head count, pointing at each, calling out as he wagged his finger: "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9." Suddenly upset the poor Fool cried out: "That's it, only 9. Omigosh! Who did we lose?"

In horrified disbelief, another Fool repeated the head count: "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9." & so did another, & another, until everyone on shore gave it a try, all confirming the original tragic announcement. The confusing part for them, of course, was that no one could figure out who was the missing one. Easy for us, we aren't shivering & wet with freezing river water, exhausted & frightened. But then again, it was kind of silly. Given that they all followed the misguided example of the first, pointing only at other heads as they counted. If only one of them had kept track & counted the number of counts called, they would have been reassured when the full 10 counts were listed.



Their luck soon changed when just then an eminent spiritual master & teacher, a *Guru* much revered in the region, came walking down their shore, having seen the pantomime

of their plight from the distance as he approached, not needing to be within earshot get the picture. But upon listening patiently & trying in vain to explain the proper Arithmetic to them, he decided to quickly demonstrate after kindly letting them off the hook, saying that many people experience confusion like this, as when told that such & such will occur in 10 days. some will ask: “Does that 10 count today, or do we start counting tomorrow as 1?” “But practical experience is best, so here we go” he said, & continuing: “when I tap your head with my staff, you the first one call out 1 & next 2 & so on until I’ve tapped the last one.”



And so he did, & they called out, a bit nervous as they got to 9. But sure enough, they distinctly heard one last hollow bonk of the staff on a head & the call 10. There he was smiling & laughing with relief, the one the *Guru* had arranged to be last, the same first one the *Guru* saw start the counting, recognizing him now as had seen him from a distance. Smiling with kindness the *Guru* concluded for him: “Yes, Thou Art the 10<sup>th</sup>.”

When equating the Non-Dual Self with Absolute Reality *Brahman*, the most authoritative Upanishads repeatedly intoned the *Mahavakya* or Great Proclamation “Thou Art That”, with Absolute Reality, *Brahman* understood to be “That.”

In “Thou Art the 10<sup>th</sup>!” the actual number 10 has no particular significance there other than in helping recall of the Parable. What matters is that each essentially makes the same mistake when failing to count himself, or more to the point, take himself into account. The remedy is to Inquire “*who am I*” in order to know oneself. Self-Knowledge, the direct result of Self-Inquiry, is also known as Self-Realization, Enlightenment, Liberation, & in the original languages: *Moksha*, *Nirvana*, *Mukti*, & so on. That is the ineffable Reality itself, ever inexplicable & beyond words. In that same Dream, the Maharshi continued to respond to a succession of questions about Self-Knowledge that were winding down-level to issues of their being two ways one forgets to take into account oneself. Both kinds of *self-amnesia* are modeled in slightly different ways by analogy based on the Parable about the 10<sup>th</sup>.



Robert Heinlein's hero in *Stranger in a Strange Land* drew from the same scriptures, without direct reference, when his planet-colony "visitor" was asked about the that colony's understanding of "God". Confused at first, that character, Michael Valentine, hesitated, pondered, & then realized what was being asked. Shaking his head in denial of the basic premise of the question, one about some separate super-being, the extra-terrestrial visitor responded: "Thou art God!" (Of course the "thou art" would not have been used unless the Mahavakya was being referenced. Written in the late 1950's & then published in '61, thus was pretty "far out" for an American *sci-fi* author.

**True happiness cannot  
be found in things  
that change & pass away.  
Pleasure & pain alternate.  
Happiness comes from the Self  
& can be found in the Self only.  
Find your real Self & all else  
will come with it.**

*selection from Nisargadatta's I Am That*



### #31) Jain Non-Duality Atma Siddhi 1:

Known as *Atma Siddhi* (power of the Self or *Self-Realization*), the *Shri Atma Siddhi Shastra* of Shrimad Rajchandra, a Jain teacher whose influenced students included Mahatma Gandhi (who himself also referred certain followers to Ramana Maharshi) – this is a text by a simply educated "businessman" that included verses like those that follow, accompanied here by selections from a disciple's commentary.

*As real Self I never knew,  
So suffered I eternal pain,*



*I bow to Him my master true,  
Who taught & broke the eternal chain.*

*"No bondage, freedom new or old,"  
others preach, in words.*

[There is little use in spouting "no bondage" so long as one continues to live in bondage to the Ego.]

*Non-attachment & all fruitful,  
If you have knowledge of the Soul,  
Of Self-knowledge they are the tool,  
The real knowledge is the goal.*

[Non-attachment & renunciation when accompanied with knowledge of the Self, cause salvation.]

*And if the heart contains no merits,  
The real knowledge cannot shine,*

[Knowledge of the Self does not dawn on a mind which is not purified by non-attachment & renunciation. The latter are the necessary means for attaining the end of the knowledge of the Self.]

*Whatever wherever is fit,  
The seeker understands & acts,*

[A true seeker of the Self practices discrimination. He clearly finds out what he misses & what he should disown & then he proceeds accordingly.]

*Self-knowledge, equal eye to lot,  
Behaves as destined, speech unique,  
Authentic in all schools of thought,  
True teacher's qualities mystic.*

[An enlightened Guru firmly possesses the knowledge of his Self & therefore is free from all desires of the not-self. He is indifferent to worldly opposites such as friend & foe, pleasure & suffering, respect & disrespect (thus the "equal eye"). Outwardly, he seems to live simply according to destiny or *karma*. His speech is "unique" in that he teaches from direct experience & Does not merely repeat the Scriptures, though he may quote them also, & often is well-versed in them.]

*Without the direct Teacher true,  
would not arise – the thought of Self,  
or searching for that Self.*

[The disciple must clearly realize that he is obliged to his living & enlightened Guru. Only with this definite understanding can the disciple think correctly about the nature of the Self. When the great intellectual minds fail to understand the Scriptures, an enlightened Guru renders them very easy to understand.]

*One's self-pride is checked at once,  
in direct Teacher's nearness,  
To root it out by use of other means,  
it can grows two-fold.*

*Anger, hunger for honor, etc. are  
deadly enemies of the Soul.*

*They cannot be destroyed by Self-pride.  
Only by seeking refuge in the sunshine  
of an enlightened living Guru*

*are those very enemies easily destroyed with little effort.*

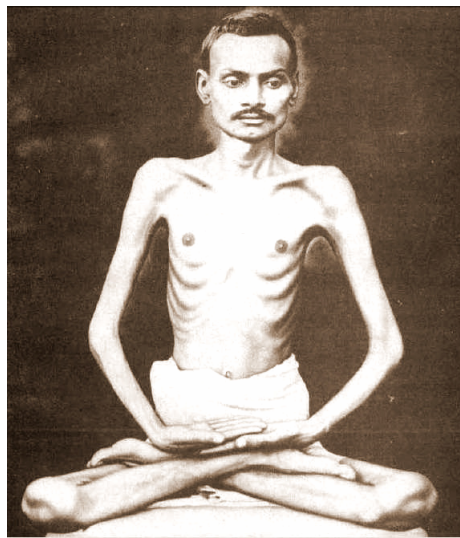
[Such is the a noble path of humility. Only the few realize its immense benefit. Only the truly humble obtain the right understanding of Reality which in turn leads them to Liberation. Sainthood is where there is true Self-knowledge, Soul-seekers follow such true Teachers. He is keen on his own Salvation & once he recognizes a true Teacher who does not insist that he should be honored by the public or that he should be recognized as a Guru.]

*The company of the Teacher true,  
Directly does the greatest good,  
Soul-seekers all accept this view,  
Complete obedience understood.*

[He feels immense gratitude to a living true Teacher whom he has found out & adopted as his sole guide in his search for the Self. He completely surrenders himself to him by thought, word & deed. He scrupulously follows his Guru's advice in every way. He realizes that in the endless series of his past lives he wandered aimlessly on account of his not meeting a living true Teacher, that he has luckily or fortunately met one such in the present life & it is a unique advantage, that meeting a true teacher of the Self is of immense benefit to himself. Therefore he decides to lead his life strictly in accordance with the advice & guidance of his living true Teacher. A true Teacher turns the mind of his disciple from unnecessary & wasteful pursuits into remembrance of the Self, meditation on it & constant repeated reading & understanding about it. He educates his disciple's speech into reading & meditation needed for Self-knowledge. By aimless behavior in the absence of a living true Teacher, a seeker of the Self may invite bondage; by using the same energy whole-heartedly in the service of a living true Teacher he can obtain Liberation.]

**Pain** is the background of all your **pleasures**.  
You want **pleasures** because you suffer.  
On the other hand, the very search for **pleasure**  
is the cause of pain. It is a vicious circle.

*selection from Nisargadatta's I Am That*



## #32) Jain Non-Duality Atma Siddhi 2:

*The path of perfection is the same,  
In all times past, present, future,  
Its path practical worth the name,  
Acceptable if helps Soul-nature.*

[A true seeker of the Self determines once for all his goal & the path to it as described above & then recognizing the need of the guidance of a living true Teacher, employs all his energies unqualifiedly in the search of a living true Teacher. There is no other urgency for him except that of realizing the Self. On the occasion of his being censured by anyone he reflects on his nature & if there is any fault in it he tries to remove it & feels obliged to one who censures him. If he does not find any justification for other's censure of his behavior, then he decides that it might be the fruit of any action (*karma*) of his past life & so he maintains calmness & feels satisfaction that the fruits of past actions are suffered & so they will be ineffective afterwards. Taking advantage of such criticism, a seeker of the Self turns his mind more intensely to spiritual reading & meditation in accord with his Guru's guidance. He firmly determines that even the least desire for worldly happiness is keeping one back from the path to Soul's salvation & therefore he turns his back to it. At the same time he has deep sympathy & fellow-feeling for all living beings. He considers all Souls as equals & he banishes all pride from himself. By such preparation the true seeker of the Self enjoys the right state of one strongly desirous of Liberation.]

*Unless one reaches such a state,  
company of teachers good,  
cannot attain the freedom-road.*

[Until one attains to the state of one strongly desirous of Liberation as described above one cannot take advantage of the path of Liberation & naturally one cannot remove his internal malady - the ignorance of the true nature of the Self. When the disciple attains to the state of the keen aspirant for Liberation, the teachings of his living enlightened Guru work a miracle on him. Every word of the Guru is rightly interpreted & adopted. Consequently the disciple turns his mind from worldly thoughts & pursuits to the single-minded reflection & meditation on the nature of the Self. He thinks only of his Soul's benefit. He rightly thinks of the method of Soul's Liberation on the basis of his Guru's teachings. In this way he gets a glimpse of the Soul's own happiness.]

*With inner-thought, self-knowledge shines,  
That knowledge delusion roots out,  
The topmost state the seeker climbs,  
Thus gets the salvation, no doubt.*

[With the right reflection on the nature of the Self comes the knowledge of one's Self & by such knowledge the Soul's deep-rooted infatuation & ignorance are removed & the Soul attains Salvation.]

*The body & the Soul seem one,  
Distinct are both, but this deceives,  
Alone the body-infatuation,  
Distinct are both as swords & sheaths.*

[By constant association of the Soul with the body that the Soul is felt as identical with its living body. In fact the Soul & its living body are quite different in nature as is the sword from its scabbard. Proper concentration on the nature of the Self can be attained by constant contact with a living, enlightened Guru. By such contact the seeker of the Self will be indifferent to the sense object contacts & he will direct all his energies to know the Self. Now, how can the Self be identified ? The nature of the Self can be grasped by discriminative differentiation between the nature of the Self & that of the living body, its

senses, & breath. The Self is Self-luminous & knowing. By a discriminative intellect the thoughts of the Self can be separated from those of the not-self - the body, the senses, & the world at large. The intellect can clearly distinguish between the conscious & the unconscious, the living & the dead. In all forms of knowledge the knower is there but different from them. There is no knowledge without the Self, the prime knower. By true insight the seeker of the Self will read the presence of the Self in the surrounding beauty of the Nature. In all doubt, the doubter will be known. While the material objects perceptible to the senses are momentary & subject to destruction, the Self is indestructible.

Leaving everything else, a seeker of the Self should have firm faith in the Self & should think & meditate on it. The eye sees through the co-operation of the Soul. In other words, the soul guides & controls the eyes to fulfill their function of seeing the objects. The senses are powerless without the co-operation & control of the Soul. The Soul is the ruler & the senses are the ruled. Therefore one can say that the Soul sees through the eyes & hears through the ears. The Soul knows the forms. Ever after leaving all forms of the body, the Soul being indestructible abides. All other things are transitory, the Soul is eternal. The Soul does not cease to be with the stoppage of breath. Liquidating one by one the imperfect & limited experiences of the Soul, the experience of the Self itself remains indubitably certain & it is the irreducible basis of all other experiences. This nature of the Soul is unique & quite distinguishable from all forms of the material being as is commonly experienced by the realized Souls. In every state of the living being, the Soul maintains its unlimited presence & superiority. Such experiences are positive proofs of the presence of the Soul as quite different from breath, senses or the rest of the living body.]

*Each sense has its own subject-knowledge,  
The knowledge of all sense-subjects,  
The Soul possesses, 'its not strange,  
The ear hears, the soul rejects.*

[Every sense-organ enables us to know only its appropriate objects, the ear cannot see & the eye cannot hear. But the Soul can know the appropriate objects of all the 5 senses. Without the co-operation of the Soul, no sense can function. Not only the Soul knows the objects perceived by the 5 senses but also it remembers them for future reference.]

*The body cannot know the Soul,  
Nor senses, neither knows the breath,  
All do their deeds, if there's the Soul,  
If it goes off, it's called death.*

[The Soul is conscious & intelligent, the body & the senses are unconscious & non-intelligent; the Soul is spiritual, the body & the senses are material, they will be dead & lifeless in the absence of the Soul. Without the Soul they cannot be known as such. Hence it is meaningless to ask as to why do the senses not see the Soul if there is one such. The body & the senses are by nature incapable of knowing or seeing the Soul. It is foolish to expect or to think of the sense-perception of the Soul.]

*In all the states the Soul separate,  
Is seen always as Consciousness,  
Distinctive mark is accurate,  
To ascertain the Soul's presence.*

[The Soul, though present in all the states of consciousness (*wakefulness, dream & sleep*) of a living being, always experiences itself as different from each & all of them. The states of consciousness come & go but the Soul remains as their knower. In human life, men pass through different stages but there is no change in the Soul's nature. It cannot be called young or old, human or divine, learned or ignorant. The Soul is known by its intelligence & consciousness. It is the eternal knower of everything. The

knowability of the Soul is eternal & indestructible.]

*The natures of the Soul & matter,  
Are clearly quite different,  
Can never be of one character.*

[The sentient & the non-sentient substances have quite different characteristics & distinction between the two is unmistakably clear at all times. The non-sentient objects or substances have no capacity to know anything. On the contrary the sentient substances are ever knowing. Therefore, one should not be mistaken for the other. They would never merge into each other. A sentient substance can never be a non-sentient one & a non-sentient substance can by no magic or logic be made into a sentient one. Both are utterly different & are experienced as such in all times.]

*Oh ! one that doubts the Soul's existence,  
He himself the Soul must be,  
'Without the doubter's obvious presence,  
Can there be doubt ?' surprises me.*

[How strange that the Soul doubts its own existence ! One cannot even say that there is no Soul in the absence of a Soul. Doubt implies the existence of the doubter, & the doubter is the Soul. There cannot be a doubt without a doubter. To believe in the experiences of an embodied Soul such as seeing pots & clothes & not to believe at the same time in the Soul whose experiences they are, is to commit a folly such as believing a shadow without a substance or believing in a reflecting of a body in the mirror without believing in the body, whose reflection it is. The Soul by nature is self-luminous & it is illuminating all other objects. We spend more time in seeing other objects by the help of the Soul & we feel we have no time in perceiving our own self-luminous Soul. Therefore, we come to a strange pass i.e. we doubt our Soul's existence.]

*One sees in childhood, youth & age,  
There's knowledge of being the same,  
So see the Soul's all states but change,  
Remaining over the substance same.*

[The Soul as a metaphysical substance possessed of infinite qualities & capable of infinite manifestations is eternally the same at all times. Its manifestations change with the successive changes of its qualities. As the same substance may manifest differently, the same Soul in a living body assumes different forms such as infancy, maturity & old age, itself remaining unchanged.

It knows & remembers all its different forms & this is possible only if it does not change with its changing manifestations. All its infinite qualities admit of increase or decrease in them but none of them is ever totally destroyed. The sea remains the same though its waves constantly change.]

*One who describes absolute change,  
Of everything at every moment,  
Must be the same who knows & says,  
This falsifies his own statement.*

[Besides, how can we say that an object or experience is momentary if we come & go with it ? One who knows that an object is momentary & says it to be so at the next moment, must be present after the momentary object is no more. Therefore we must admit that the knower of the momentariness of objects cannot be momentary himself. On this evidence one should decide that the Soul that knows itself, its qualities, its manifestations & the world around, is eternal & not momentary.]

*Continuous flow of knowledge pure,*

*Of one's Self-nature unalloyed,  
Is termed the perfect knowledge sure,  
Liberated he is though embodied.*

[In such a state the aspirant has the absolute & incessant knowledge of the nature of the Self. It is free from all illusions & limitations. It is ever irreducible & indestructible & so it is called absolute knowledge. The Soul with the absolute knowledge experiences highest liberation though it is embodied. In brief, non-attachment brings Liberation or Salvation.]

*A dream of million years ends soon,  
When one awakes, so Self-knowledge,  
When shines, goes off one's Self-delusion,  
Of time eternal: it's not strange.*

[From times immemorial the embodied Soul wrongly believes & acts as if he is a body & not a Self. He identifies himself with the activities of the body not knowing the nature of the Self in him. But the moment he receives the absolute knowledge of the nature of the Self, all his past mistakes & shortcomings are removed like a removal of a long dream by return to wakefulness. The dawn of absolute knowledge in the Soul destroys in a wink all his ignorance of the endless past.]

*Let go the body-infatuation,  
And you will not have bondage new.*

[The root-cause of all miseries consists in the Soul's ignorance i.e. in its Self-identification with the body & bodily activities & considering one's wife & children as one's own. This is called Self-delusion. Therefore one should learn to distinguish between the Self & the body, etc. - the Self as the sentient knower & seer, the body, etc. as the non-sentient objects, the known. Attachment, hatred, etc. are born of ignorance. The knowledge of the nature of the Self removes it & then such an enlightened Soul realizes the Self as the seer & not the author of actions nor the enjoyer of the fruits thereof. To remove the Soul's delusion of believing the body, etc. as the Self is to destroy the existing actions binding the Soul & not to create the fresh ones, & that is the secret of religion. All religious methods aim at removing the Soul's attachment to the body etc. The more non-attached one is the more truly he knows.]

**Observe. You are not different from others.  
Most of their experiences are valid for you too.  
Go into the structure of your **desires**.  
They powerfully affect your actions.  
You cannot abandon what you do not know.  
To go beyond yourself, you must know yourself.**

*selection from Nisargadatta's I Am That*



### **#33) Jain Non-Duality Atma Siddhi 3:**

*Enlightened, pure, full consciousness,  
Self-brilliant, home of happiness,  
What more to say ? Have eagerness,  
Think deep & you shall realize this.*

[You are pure, enlightened, sentience-embodiment, self-luminous, abode of eternal bliss. What more should we say in this connection ? To be brief, think deep & realize your Self. On realizing the Self, the



Self is eternally pure, free from all actions & therefore holy. As it is knowledge itself it is powerful to know everything else. It is the sentience-embodiment, free from any relation to the material body. The Self has moved from body to body in the mundane journey but in none of the births the Self has changed itself into the material body. No part of the Self separates from it. Therefore it is one & impartite. The Self's light of knowledge is eternal, all pervading & bringing to light everything else. Bliss is the nature of the Self alone. The bliss experienced & enjoyed by enlightened Soul comes from its own Self & not from any extraneous source. The Self is bliss indestructible. The powers of the Self are infinite & cannot be exhaustively described. The Self can be realized by deep thinking & meditation, be aspiring for it alone, by sincere hankering for it, by concentrating our interest in it. In the above discourse the enlightened Guru has completed his say. Mere hearing or talking about Liberation is not enough. One gains only by acting up to the advice & teachings of the enlightened living Guru. The enlightened living Guru finally declares that all the enlightened Souls have arrived to the same conclusion as arrived here. The teachings embodied above constitute their universal message. & endless line of enlightened Souls in the past have obtained Liberation in the same way as declared here. For the benefit of the disciples, the enlightened living Guru has to take resort to speech, a function of the body. Since the purpose is served, the Guru retires in his own nature as the Self & maintaining silence enters into the deep concentration on the Self.]

*I knew myself as pure consciousness,  
Immortal, ever-lasting, strong,  
Above all body-states ageless or deathless,  
Perpetual existence, no wrong.*

[As to the eternity of the Self, the disciple reveals that he experiences the Self as pure sentience, free from old age, death & destruction, for they are only the stages of the material living body & never of the Self. Self is experienced as eternally identical, immortal & indestructible & distinct from the body.]

*If you hope for Soul-Reality,  
True self-effort you must begin,  
Depending on fate, destiny,  
Destroy not self-searching, I mean.*

[If at all you sincerely aspire for Self-realization you start the right Self-effort for it. But do not block your spiritual progress by excuses such as Fate, Destiny, Time, etc. Many people lightly talk of Liberation in terms of worldly prosperity or bodily happiness. They know nothing about it. The nature of Liberation can be explained only by an enlightened living Guru & then only such an explanation brings about the desired change in the disciple. Those, who talk of the miracle of fate, etc. & set aside personal effort for Liberation as unnecessary, work contrary to their Self & entangle themselves in further delusions & deep ignorance. Getting the invaluable human birth & not thinking of Liberation of the Soul is to waste it away. Those who talk of Liberation but do not strive for it should know that the sincere aspiration for Liberation has not yet dawned in them, & in order to get it they should constantly seek the company of an enlightened living Guru, & in his absence that of the teachings of the spiritual Saviors. A firm determination to be liberated is going half-way on the path of Liberation. After it, one will try to close up his shop of worldly life & concentrate all his energies towards obtaining revelation of the Self in him. One must make conscious & determined effort not to initiate new actions & to suffer away the fruits of the old ones without any interest in them. Interest in body & the world cannot stay side by side with the interest in the Self.]

*By hearing words of view absolute,  
Let not one give up formal means,  
Attending to the view absolute,*

*One should perform all freedom-means.*

[A disciple aspiring for Liberation should continue to follow the means for it as enjoined by his spiritual Savior & should not stop or leave them simply on hearing the doctrinal truths from the pure metaphysical view-points that the Self is ever free, unattached & perfect. Many intellectual theorists misguide themselves & indulge in committing sins with an understanding that since the Self is ever free, unattached & perfect their sins will not defile their souls. Such men not only leave religion but become positively irreligious, & immoral. The only way to save such souls is to impress upon them the need of an enlightened Guru for a right understanding of doctrinal truths described in scripture. Right understanding of the nature of the Self & appropriate conduct together can yield Liberation. One without the other can increase Self-delusion & ignorance, unavailing for Liberation.]

*The seer's state is thus described,*

*The world to him is like a dream.*

[That Soul is called enlightened who loses all interest in the whole world & regards it either as useless as a left off food or purely as a dream. All so-called knowledge not backed by the spirit of non-attachment is meaningless talk. Such enlightenment is very difficult to experience though easy to talk. Even the best dream is still a dream & it should be left in order to enjoy wakeful life. The enlightened Soul feels that things of the world though of long standing gradually or suddenly vanish or get destroyed. Naturally therefore, they are not the worthy objects of his interest & attachment. The Self will never be destroyed. So the Soul's interest should be fixed in the Self & in nothing else. The enlightened Soul firmly knows that the aspirant for Liberation should determine that by taking interest in the world one has always to lose something & one day at death all belonging will be rooted out. Therefore one should gradually forget the worldly actions & reactions & feel that he has nothing to do with them. Only when the mind is emptied of worldly thoughts then the thoughts of the Self can fill their place. The dreams in sleep are due to an intense bodily attachment developed by a person. In the absence of bodily attachment these dreams will not occur or arise.]

**You must watch yourself continuously – particularly your *mind* – moment by moment, missing nothing. This witnessing is essential for the separation of the self from the not-self.**

*selection from Nisargadatta's I Am That*



### #34) Looking Back at the Matrix 1:

Among the array of Cosmologies, both ancient & modern, the "Universe as Thought" idea was first hinted at in the West by Parmenides, though long familiar, far earlier in the East. For the Sage, Parmenides, Reality as Consciousness was his actual point.

Plato's Allegory, (*student of Socrates who learned much from Parmenides*) toned this concept down to an Idealism that Plato ultimately relinquished for his own Realism of "Ideals" (*not really "Idealism"*).

After a couple of millennia & musings of Rene Descartes, George Berkeley revived *Idealism*, "Universe as Thought", as well as later philosophers, including Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Kant & finally F.H. Bradley whose esteem was "destroyed" by the Analytical Philosophy evolving from Logical Positivism.

Physics revived *Quantum Idealism* after in the Bohr-Heisenberg-Born Probabilistic Copenhagen II Quantum Theory. Computer Science developed a potent metaphor for *Idealism* in Virtual Reality, VR, & later in the Hologram Universe & Computational Universe of Physics. The Holographic Principle sees the World as Information which can amount to an *Idealism*, depending of "whose" Information this is. Parallel to this long development in the West, the Eastern Philosophies remained relatively static. The elite still see Reality as Consciousness while the majority strive to approach such an understanding through more intellectual & religious means.

The West's "World as Information" remains an unreal objective shadow of subjective Consciousness, but the presence of VR in technology & in cinema keeps the seed of at least *Idealism* alive. Enter *The Matrix* which convincingly depicted for viewers World-wide how a VR world could work. David Chalmers & other Cognitive Science Philosophers made *The Matrix* university course material. We pick up this brief history of the idea, after a few quotes from the movie.

"Wake up Neo, *The Matrix* has you!"

*After finding that message on his computer screen, Neo himself had asked:*

"You ever have that feeling where you're not sure if you're awake or still dreaming?"

*Later, Morpheus asks:*

"Have you ever had a dream, Neo, that you were so sure was real?"

What if you were unable to wake from that dream?

"How would you know the difference between the dream world & the real world?"

*Later on Morpheus explains:*

"You've been living in a dream world & more specifically: *The Matrix* is a computer generated dream world built to keep us under control."

Leaving such dialogue for the moment, we go back to Berkeley's original inspiration, that is: Rene Descartes' "Brain in a Vat". In his speculation he imagined, wondered, & asked if oblivious, misled existence should be foisted on a "naked" Brain in a hypothetical Vat, by some feisty *malin genie* (evil genius or genie), how would the Brain know any better? Without technology to imagine how, Descartes had to supply supernatural trickery. In the "vat" that seems to be our own Skull, how can our own Brain ever know the difference? Perception thoughts imply a World perhaps but they never contact or prove there is a World. Our only experience is Thought, conceptual & perceptual.

Mary Shelly had Frankenstein's "Igor" drop the intended Brain vat & cover his tracks with an unfortunately criminal Brain, who somehow still became a pathetic character, with some violence issues. One evil genius after another initiated various shenanigans on "Donovan's Brain" & Steve Martin's comic tribute "Man with 2 Brains".

*The Matrix* put the entire corpse into the Vat, but the VR programmed into the Brain was similar. But how does the Brain, or we, know there really is a Vat, a corpse, a Brain, a World? Well, in *The Matrix* those who "awaken" do so by "unplugging" but did they fully "unplug"?

*Remember that when projecting Neo's mind into a VR "training program". Neo points to some conspicuous furniture, alone in a "white space", while & asks: "Is this real?" Whereupon Morpheus responds:*

**What is real? How do you define Real?**

**If you're talking about what you can feel, what you can smell, what you can taste & see, then "Real" is simply electrical signals interpreted by your Brain.**

But when "unplugged", Morpheus "forgets" to question & make the same point about the senses & "electrical signals" by which they later experience the "*desert of the real*." The audience, producers, funders, or somebody wasn't ready to take that next step, but it is obvious. Whatever Morpheus demonstrates for *The Matrix* VR program applies to his & our "real world" as well.

Now "the machines" in *The Matrix* were rather evil, just as Descartes' *malin genie*. Rene's contemporaries saw the "blasphemy" in his suggestion that any God would be so nasty as to trick & fool us. But perhaps we trick & fool ourselves. Who is to say a "God" would not choose an Information Universe over the task of "creating" inert Matter out of Nothing (*creatio ex nihilo*). We mentioned the objection of Parmenides & other Eleatic Philosophers "*ex nihilo, nihil fit*" (no thing comes out of Nothing, if only because Nothing is what does not exist). So when that became the "blasphemy", the absence of a Material World, the great *Idealist* Bishop George Berkeley publicly covered his crime.

He re-inserted a Material World "template" that we never contact, but that God uses to design the Ideas he implants. Fichte dispensed with that "template", as Berkeley secretly had in later years, but Hegel & Kant re-inserted the "template", as did British *Idealists* (except for Bradley), the American Royce, & today's Turkish web-author Harun Yahya.

Back at Descartes' *malin genie*, his critics accusingly attribute vast powers (*summe potens et callidus*), those of distorting ("the heavens, air, earth, colors, form, sound, & all external things") & also Thought. They included the casting of altered Mathematics & Logic, running as deep as the Principle of Contradiction, as in true-false, possible-impossible, & all such turned topsy-turvy. Imagination exceeds contemporary Physicists who assume Mathematics & Logic to be primeval, preceding any Universe. But in Descartes' day such god-like powers were deemed too tricky & thus unworthy of God himself. But all demonic lore grant such powers to the Devil, even in the New Testament, where demons recognize Jesus at once, while his disciples don't "get it" for a long time.

As just one more example, among the numerous, consider the resemblance, long known between the millennium older mythology of Horus & that of Jesus who is absent from all historical records. Those same records do however suggest doctrinal imitation of Apollonius of Tyana, a contemporary of the historically "invisible" Jesus, Paul, etc. The Church excommunicated their greatest early mystic, Origen for suggesting as much & offered this counter-story, which remains on the Vatican "books". A thousand years earlier, Satan foresaw the Jesus thing & saw to it that the Horus mythology would be identical. Then in the First Century, he magically created Apollonius as a demon appearing to be a well-documented, Jesus-like saint & a Sage. Why? Well, to "test the faith of the faithful, of course!" What a crock! But that's their story & their sticking to it. In any case, Satan's powers are awesomely godlike there, far beyond some "riches" with which to purchase a soul.

Realization is but the opposite of ignorance.  
To take the **World** as real & one's **Self** as  
unreal is ignorance, the cause of sorrow.  
To know the **Self** as the only reality & all  
else as temporal & transient is freedom,  
peace, & joy. It is all very simple instead  
of seeing things as imagined, learn to see  
them as they are. When you can see everything  
as it is, you will also see yourself as you are.  
It is like cleansing a mirror. The same mirror  
that shows you the world as it is,  
will also show you your own face.  
The thought '**I am**' is the polishing cloth.

*selection from Nisargadatta's I Am That*

### #35) Looking Back at the Matrix 2:

When last we left the background topic of Descartes' "Brain in a Vat" & the *malin genie* who administered it, we mentioned how the oblique implication of a Trickster God had gotten him into theological hot water. Part of the context for this reaction lie in Plato's

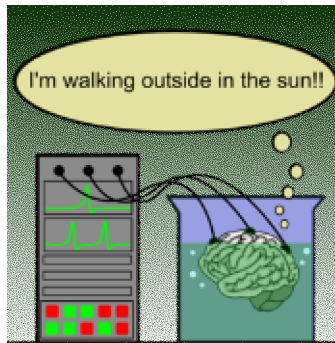


*Euthyphro* dilemma, which suggested an arbitrary willful God for whom “good” is whatever he wants. This was not a strange idea for all the " God-fearing" population impressed with the Old Testament's wrathful Yahweh.

Why should they care so much about what old Plato thought a millennium earlier ? Well, moving from the Old Testament into the New, any textual scholar would find that most of the theology of good & evil, heaven & life of the soul, & all manner of Christian creed was lifted out of whole cloth from Plato's philosophy, knowledge of which constituted the education of any scholar, be it clergy or otherwise.

The *Euthyphro* paranoia, of God as the harsh Parent (& *ordinary parents were quite harsh during the previous few thousands of years*) led to buzz-words like *Deus Deceptor* & *dystheistic* Gnostic Demiurge concepts. Various “world-hating” sects that sought the favor of a fierce Deity included Sethians, Basilideans, & Valentinians. All these expressed schizoid deity-resentment that resembled the same Manichaean strains of Zoroastrianism that also imbued Christian mystics schooled by Augustine of Hippo.

For modern scientists who make Mathematics & Logic to be their God, any *malin genie*’s vast powers could never impose the same power over Math & Logic but that was taken for granted in former times. Such distorted alteration of Reality is now generally unimaginable, except when convenient for Multi-verse *Ensemble* refutations of the Anthropic Principle.



In any case, the actual essence of Descartes' "*Brain in a Vat*" scenario was that person, who is the original owner of the "disembodied" Brain, continues to “experience” a normal Life in a real World. The neural Input & Output of that Brain in a Vat are the same as those for a Brain in a Skull. The latter Cranium is after all but a "vat" of composite collagen-protein & phosphate crystal resembling flouro-hydroxy-apatite. Nor need we put too fine a point on this pencil for, of course, that "vat" or skull itself is only experienced a collection of sense-impulses like the rest of the World, however truly or falsely one thinks such experience.

So in the spirit of taking Descartes' & *The Matrix*'s "Brain-in-Vat" as a powerful metaphor, for the Skull being such a "Vat" we, like Neo & Morpheus do well to ask



similar questions. *What if I am dreaming right now?* This written or electronic conversation I am having with you seems real in every way, but so did my Dream last night. Like Chuang Tzu, I have to wonder whether or not I was a man having a dream of being a butterfly. What if I am a butterfly at this very moment dreaming of being a man?

In *The Matrix* movie a robust Virtual Reality is described as responding to a Brain's outputs, & those of many other Brains of *envatted* humans, simultaneously & interactively. The same holds for the "Maya" Virtual Reality fictionally developed in a book I wrote. There the "Maya" program thickens the mix with near-human "Bots", robotic programs, filling out the numbers, The Matrix movie also had agent programs, etc. with more AI than some of the other avatars. Then again there are simpler "Bots" like ones that served the actual movie as background characters. Any VR avatar who believes all others are "Bots" is of course a *Solipsist*, dirtiest of words in Philosophy. Fellow characters in VR & Dream are "you" in disguise, resembling the qualified-Vedanta version favored here for such symbolic discussions.

"Alice, this sleeping Red King is dreaming you, & if he were to wake up you would "go out—bang!—just like a candle."      slightly paraphrased Tweedledum & Tweedledee in Lewis Carroll's "Through the Looking-Glass"

The 1999 *Matrix* movie's robust VR was originally considered to be "out of reach" for those inadvertent to Moore's Law, the exponential growth rule-of-thumb for both computing miniaturization & top-end computing power. Successfully-predicting futurists like Ray Kurzweil foresee \$1,000 computers with input/output-capabilities of the human Brain in the early 2020's & full-brain-memory/software-structure uploading by the late 2020's. Projecting this same Moore's Law Exponential Growth as far as needed into the Future, philosophers like Nick Bostrom & David Chalmers see *The Matrix* level robustness for full-World VR in the not so distant Future.

In fact, given the natural likelihood of classic-oldie-world-realm VR's in that Future (*if our technological civilization survives long enough*), Bostrom "proves" that it may be a Trillion-to-One odds that we are in such a VR right now. Like we saw in *The Matrix*, our own "World" (*retroactively as it were*) could have been duplicated by some civilization of the Future or on some other planet. In fact they suggest, our present World could right now be such a VR & we could never know the difference. The hypothetical VR creation on some mega-mega-computer of the Future must still face "Boltzman's Brain" limitations on Negentropy-Information limits set by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Law of Thermodynamics. Required are mega-mega-computers harnessing solar-systems to supply Mass-Energy, in Davies scenarios.

Nick Bostrom's analysis makes it more probable, by sheer odds & numbers, that our World is a VR computer simulation since "so many of those Computer Simulations are

bound to be programmed someday, & this is likely to be one of them now.” Since Trillions are bound to be programmed compared to our supposed single Universe, some of that Trillion-to-One ratio favors the chance our World is already a VR program. Bostrum deduces we likely live in a VR unless we later annihilate ourselves. In that case there will not be a Future Civilization who would program us. Climate Change, Population, etc. are “bullets” that could affect our “civilization suicide”. Otherwise we could be the victim of an Asteroid impact or other external planet killer. Those failing, we need only few who are ancestors of those who later programmed the rest of us into the historical VR Universe we take to be real. Got all that? It’s a fun mind-game but it does help us to question our present World.

I had no idea of meditation or contemplation.  
I was never attracted by them.  
My mind refuses to pay any attention to them.  
*Sadhana* implies an object to be gained &  
the means of gaining it.  
What is there to be gained  
which we do not already possess?  
In meditation, concentration & contemplation,  
what we have to do is only  
not to think of anything, but to be still !  
Then we shall be in our natural state.  
This natural state is given many names –  
*moksha, jnana, atma, ...*  
There was a time when I used to remain  
with my eyes closed.  
That does not mean that  
I was practicing any *sadhana* then.  
Even now I sometimes remain  
with my eyes closed.  
People seem to think that by practicing  
some elaborate *sadhana* the Self would  
some day descend upon them as something  
very big & with tremendous glory & they would  
then have what is called *sakshatkaram* (realization).  
The Self is *sakshat* (direct), all right, but there is  
no *karam* (doing) or *kritam* (done) about it.  
The word *karam* implies one's doing something.  
But the Self is realized not by one's doing something,  
but by one's refraining from doing anything –  
by remaining still & being simply what one really is !

selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi

### #36) Looking Back at the Matrix 3:

Astronomer-Physicist, Sir Arthur Eddington, at the prior turn of a century, declared that Relativity & Quantum Theory revealed the Universe to be Mind-like. Some physicists like Ed Fredkin at the more recent turn of a century declared the underlying structure of *quarks & strings* that compose them to be "computational". Stephen Wolfram in *A New Kind of Science* details a model of physical reality as *cellular automata* that is philosophically similar. Between these 2 recent viewpoints, VR & Computationalism, the World is possibly either “in a” Computer or “is a” Computer, or in some other way unreal for Scientists. We later include Bohm’s far-out *Hologram Universe* & then the even “tripier” *Holographic Universe*, as well as less serious efforts like MBT & so on.

We ourselves find all the foregoing to be fascinating, thought-provoking, & yet childishly-Materialist-Realist. The Objective viewpoint similarly considers that a human is either “*in a*” Body or “*is a*” Body, much as a VR World could either be “*in a*” Computer” or “*is a*” Computer. For the Non-Dual *Vedanta*, the sense-World appears to be more “*like a Dream*,” the Universe “*like a Computer*” & the human “*like a Body*”.

For a number of the false-reality scenarios, & especially the "Brain in a Vat", Cognitive Science philosopher David Chalmers reviewed some key-points that highlight the use VR analogies.

1) Contrary to the possible immediate conclusion, that the Brain in a Vat is massively deluded, Chalmers denies this facile condemnation. Granted is it that, as it was for Neo in The Matrix movie, the World assumed by any Brain in a Vat & also the presumably associated VR Body are both unreal. But Since *The Matrix* or other such robust VR simulations would purport to capture "in code: all the same *RWOT* (real-world-out-there) Physics, & since the *envatted* Brain interacts with this simulated World with the virtual version of ordinary neural Input & Output, the Brain cannot be blamed for taking it to be real. It has no way to know its actual situation, just as we have no way to know. We too cannot know for sure whether or not we are right now in a Matrix or VR simulation. This first proposition by Chalmers compares vaguely to the situation for Non-Duality. Like VR, actual Non-Duality is so all inclusive that one cannot study it & argue from outside that system in order to thus prove or disprove, by verbal argument, its validity. Agreeing in faith or just disagreeing out of bias are the only recourse for the Mind since "proof", as a concept, does not apply.

Curiously, the foregoing alone invokes a Godel-incompleteness critique [*regarding systems that cannot prove all things such as the existence of the system itself*] that Chalmers imposes on the Turing Principle & thus any computational VR Universe. David Deutsch further employs some of Georg Cantor's infinity principles in his *CanGoTu* (Cantor, Godel, Turing) perspective in assessing robustness–feasibility. Deutsch considers the computational load of nested situations, multiple possible contingent futures, & any limitation to be preventing a purely VR Universe from including itself. Similar & simpler discussions ask questions like: what was there “before” a Big Bang, & “where” did that Big Bang occur? [*Facile responses that: “the Big Bang rolled out Time & Space themselves & so the foregoing questions have no meaning” seem to beg the question & remain unsatisfying.*]

But *The Matrix* need not "code" for a whole Universe any more than our own minds need "code" for a whole Universe. All any *Matrix* needs, all any of us need, is the "thin slice" of immediate Sense Perception from which we infer the "rest of the Universe" is "really there." When I drive the freeway, most of the other driver's faces, behind their windshield, are without detail or provable Life or Intelligence. To my Senses, they are

"filling-in" *Bots*, like the "lollipop" trees I see in the distance. I perceive so little of "a Universe" at any moment & yet I assume its "all there." So it is with any *VR*, it need code for any detail or interaction only when & as the occur, like a video-game.

Thus, **if the thought-wave that rises is one of dislike for a thing of a particular taste, the removal of that thing will calm down the thought-wave** and thus the mind will subside; hence **happiness**, which is your real nature, **is then revealed. If the thought-wave is one of a liking for a thing of a particular taste, when you get that thing the thought-wave will calm down** and the mind will subside; hence **here again happiness is revealed.** Therefore, it will be clear to those who keenly observe that happiness is experienced only by quieting the thoughts which rise again and again. It does not matter whether a thing is sweet or bitter. **The rising of thought-waves in the form of likes and dislikes for things alone is sorrow, & their subsidence alone is Happiness.**

*selection from Sadhu Om's commentary on Maharshi's teachings*

### #37) Looking Back at the Matrix 4:

Continuing to review some of the *VR* comments made by David Chalmers, we note that his point about the Brain being unable to tell the difference, so long as the simulation is a sufficiently robust – that was far earlier summarized by Bishop George Berkeley. If "reality" as we know it can only be "appearance", then "appearance: is also "reality." In other words, the Senses deceive us anyway. But if there is no other "reality", then the Sense-World is the "reality" of our mundane understanding. Furthermore, if George Berkeley had it right, then "deceptive" Sense-input is all there is of a World. & so that Input is not strictly "deceptive" but just simply the World, that's all. In that way, Chalmers denies that the Brain in a Vat is deluded at all, nor need the discarded Descartes version of a tricky God be dismissed. In that latter case, what seemed like Descartes' & Berkeley's skeptical hypothesis turns out to be "Realism". Instead of a skeptical hypothesis, Chalmers names it a "metaphysical" hypothesis akin to Scientific Realism. Taking to be "real" some or all of Relativity, Quantum Theory, String Theory, & so on, Scientific "Realism" advocates strange & surprising speculations as extreme as those of Descartes & Berkeley, only different ones. Scientific Realism is also "metaphysical" in the sense applied by Chalmers to the *Idealist* skeptical hypotheses of Descartes & Berkeley. Cosmology, Atomic Theory, & the later Standard Model of *quarks* already ripped away mundane "realism" & replaced its World with a an essentially "metaphysical" Universe.

However much the Dualism of Descartes was maligned in the succeeding centuries, 20th Quantum Idealism was a return to that Mind-Matter Duality, & such remains espoused by say 10% of Physicists. Another 20% stand firm on the (bias) conviction that original Quantum Mechanics is fundamentally wrong though it stands with the work of Newton & Einstein as the most experimentally verified successes in Science. These Materialist Monists, who focus on a Physical-only Universe, include Everett's Many-Worlds Quantum Mechanics, Feynman's Sum over Histories Quantum Mechanics, Quantum Incoherence & the various Computational models fall in this remake of Copenhagen-II Quantum Mechanics camp. Of the remaining hypothetical 70% [crude approximation], some 40% remain Materialist Monists but through up their hands at the prospect of explaining Quantum Mechanics. They are content to apply the calculations & hope for more explanation in the Future. The final 30% [optimistic estimate] aspire to be Mental Monists like Berkeley & Eddington, or the spiritual Monists who adhere to QND Qualified Non-Duality, whether they are aware of that term or not. This means they seek some Non-Dual vision but retain Individual Identity, & usually the same for the Universe & all the Objects in that Universe.

A computational Universe is even more fantastic, more mind-like in a mode similar to but other than the Copenhagen II Convention, the von-Neumann–Born–Wigner–Wheeler Consciousness-created Quantum reality that Eddington dubbed "Mind-like". We ourselves are neither here nor there on the Computational part, but if it further rocks the Materialist boat, we say hear, hear! Computational models reduce the RWO T to Information which is Mind-like, or at least Thought-like. The "orthodox" Copenhagen II Convention of Quantum Mechanics is even more "attractive" in being a Consciousness-created reality, even if that Consciousness is usually limited in the imagination of Physicists to conceptual & perceptual "awareness" of Individuals. They generally fall short of deducing that if their Body is Consciousness-created, then defining Individuality is problematic, to say the least.

A convincing VR facsimile need be no more perfect than is necessary to convince the Perceiver. That standard is far, far less than coding or fabricating an entire Universe. Only the thin Perceptual slice experienced by conscious *avatars* in a VT at any given moment would constitute the computational load. That is still a tall order, especially since these slice-composites must seem "interactive" by sorting through myriad possibilities each moment, based on the choices & consequences experienced by other *avatars* – but not all of them, just those nearby or directly related or involved. Each VR avatar only needs a detailed enough revolving-spherical-screen created to fool any given protagonist, much like in a Dream. You don't get to see & verify the entire Dream-World any more that you don't get to see & verify a *RWOT*.

*It always bothers me that, according to the Laws as we understand them today, it takes a computing machine an infinite number of logical operations to figure out what goes on in no matter how tiny a region of Space, & no matter how tiny a region of Time. How can all that be going on in that tiny*

*Space? Why should it take an infinite amount of Logic to figure out what one tiny piece of Space–Time is going to do? So I have often made the hypotheses that ultimately Physics will not require a mathematical statement, that in the end, the machinery will be revealed, & the Laws will turn out to be simple, like the checker board with all its apparent complexities included.*

Richard Feynman

To the Wise it is immaterial whether the World appears or not. In either case, his attention is directed towards the Self. He sees nothing separate from the Self. He is the Self. He always remains as the Self.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

### #38) Looking Back at the Matrix 5:

Philosophically, *ala* Godel, no super-VR mechanism can be self-creating, & some “other source” must be credited. Future computer programmers, space aliens, & the like are candidates fantastic enough. Bostrum & Chalmers notwithstanding, it might be just as easy to call this “other source” God & consider it as such. More Deistic terms like Nature or simply Reality will do for the moment as well. VR models for Reality are not Ultimate Truth, but they may be as plausible as Scientific Realism. The *Computational Hypothesis* cannot be “fundamental”. In simple terms, there may still need to be some kind of “computer” to manage those bits of information instead of some “pure bits” constituting the fundamental rock-bottom background of the Universe, boot-strapping among themselves to evolve higher emergent structures. To put the qualifier in “Vat” terms, just as any VR presumes a “programmer”, so too does any “Vat” need a World of its own to be in. *The Matrix* metaphor extended too far similarly falls prey to an infinite regression. So too does a “Computational Universe” or a “Multi-verse” lead to some deeper reality, & that to deeper one, & on & on without end.

Chalmers also reviewed some alternative *Matrix* – type VR's. A *New Matrix Hypothesis* whereby a person is recently created (*programmed*) with embedded memories in a newly-created *Matrix*. What then is “Time” in such a computational creation (*program*)? What we call an “hour” could contain Billions of VR years with Trillions of *avatars*, compressed in computer code. Hence some of the “odds” in Bostrom's “we VR now” hypothesis. Conception-gestation-birth-childhood in VR is a timeless event anyway? Then what is recent or ancient? This finally is where the Matrix Hypothesis gets close to a real God's-eye perspective if that God be creator of Time rather than embedded in Time. The basic description also applies clearly to nightly Dreams & daydreams. Dreams can last for dream “decades” but actually occur as one of several dreams in a nightly rest.

Another “option” is a *Recent Matrix Hypothesis* wherein a prior life-story unfolds before the Brain is “put into the Vat.” This is a bit like a sighted-person who goes blind later on, while the former *New Matrix Hypothesis* compares more to one blind from birth. Whether both can “see” in some of their dreams is a controversial issue. In any case, a



*vision-prosthesis* is more easily trained for a blind person who formerly could see. So too would programming a previously external life into a Virtual one be easier. Retroactive Amnesia could perhaps be included along with past-memory fabrication. When not a matter of brain-washing, etc., this version is already deliberately entered for enhanced performance, sex-at-a-distance, entertainment, training, etc.

Yet another "option" is a *Local Matrix Hypothesis* where a Brain is *envatted* "somewhere" in a physical Universe with just enough Virtual "World" for the Brain to "live" in, while little is known about the rest of the World. This is like the Dream or being lost in the story in a Theater, including movie theaters. Here an imagined, physically fabricated VR local-realities could be "enjoyed." One can be viewing a re-enactment of Lewis Carroll's *Alice* or *Looking Glass*, or else *Caligari's Cabinet*, or Cocteau's *Orpheus*, Frank Herbert's *Dune* as a movie. But the same applies to being lost in the novel or other novels like John Barnes' *Mother of Storms*, Baudrillard's *Simulacra* (commemorated in *The Matrix*), & Hollywood's dramatizations like *Frankenstein* & *Donovan's Brain*, *The Man with 2 Brains*, *Brain Dead*, Star Trek's *Spock's Brain*, *Blade Runner*, *Brainstorm*, *The Truman Show*, & *A.I.* We can also include other (some earlier) films like *Tron*, *Lawnmower Man I & II*, *Necromancer*, *Flatliners*, *Virtuosity*, *Videodrome*, *eXistenZ*, *Dark City*, *The 13th Floor*, *Harsh Realm*, *Minority Report*, *Avalon*, *Surrogates*, *Avatar*, *Inception*, & various less applicable films such as *The Devil's Advocate*, *Knowing*, or UFO "true stories" like *Communion*, *Fire in the Sky*, & *The 4th Kind*, or Carl Sagan's posthumous story-fulfillment in the movie *Contact*. These are examples of a *Local Creation Hypothesis*, like one's own Life or any one Dream. More media examples could be noted. Dream-version movie analogies are especially prominent in *Dreamscape*, *Johnny Mnemonic*, *Total Recall*, *Jacob's Ladder*, *The Jacket*, *Strange Days*, *Groundhog Day*, & later the *Vanilla Sky*'s remake of *Abre Los Ojos* – *Open Your Eyes*. There is also earlier examples like in the TV *Twilight Zone* episode *Shadow Play* of a man trapped in a nightmare. Ted Dekker's *Circle Series* & other books like *Waking Life* deal similarly with Dream entrapment, usually unwilling victimization by government or some personal discretionary adventure.

An older obscure novella by Herman Hesse has a *magician* honor a man's wish to return to his youth, retaining all the knowledge & experience he has acquired since then. Rare in females, this fantasy is somewhat common in males who want to relive their Youth knowing the 2<sup>nd</sup> time how to approach girls, how to defend themselves with martial arts they would learn, how to make-save-invest money, & generally how to make more advantageous decisions. An irony in Hesse's novella is that *karma* drove the events the first-go-round only repeated them again, more or less. Getting to repeat it without any change in or consuming of *karma*, the youth, granted his wish by the Magician, finds that the same fatal errors & tragedies occur the 2<sup>nd</sup> time, even though he can see them coming. They eventuate in other ways to get round his prescience. But he finds it even more

horrible than the 1<sup>st</sup> time to unavoidably suffer the same fates with foreknowledge now that they are coming up, “just around the corner.”

The *Back To The Future* comedy film series (parts I, II, III) also exhibit the popularity of the “chance to re-visit” theme & include at *time-travel-paradox* danger. Most crudely, if the time-traveler accidentally changes Past events in such a way that his forebears do not meet & he is never born. Then "pop!" in an *out-of-time* instant he disappears since he has never existed. In one of H.G. Well's Time-travel stories, *Food of the Gods*, the protagonist, who learned to be heroic, does come back heroic to his proper Time. But then finds his Present improved due to some of his own efforts in the revisited Past. One irrelevant difference is that the navy blue police uniform color ("Deep Blue etc.") has inexplicably turned out to be pink in the new altered Present.

*Whatever I have accepted until now as most true, has come to me through my Senses. But occasionally I have found that they have deceived me, & it is unwise to trust completely those who have deceived us even once.*

Rene Descartes

*Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me.*

pop Yiddish proverb

Why do you think of the Ego & also suffer?  
What is ignorance again?  
It is that which is non-existent.  
However the worldly life requires  
the hypothesis of avidya.  
Avidya is only our ignorance & nothing more.  
It is ignorance or forgetfulness of the Self.  
Can there be darkness before the Sun?  
Similarly, can there be ignorance before  
the self-evident & self-luminous Self?  
If you know the Self there will be no darkness,  
no ignorance & no misery.  
It is the Mind which feels the trouble & the misery.  
Darkness never comes nor goes.  
See the Sun & there is no darkness.  
Similarly, see the Self &  
avidya will be found not to exist.

selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi

### #39) Looking Back at the Matrix 6:

In our previous comparisons with a *Local Matrix Hypothesis*, we need not even mention the many online interactive Sim Worlds, the reverse-age movies like Big, nor the innumerable stories & Hollywood movies where 2 people switch bodies, for a time. In older stories these were rich & poor, while now they are more often old & young, or male & female. They magically switch identities for a limited time & live an unreal life in the other's skin. Then there are “leaks” between 2 realms or 1-way full-containment in the VR World, like Cypher's choice in *The Matrix*. Or else there is no choice but to continue in a *virtual realm* in more rare variations on the above themes.

An entirely different imagined category is the *Extendible Local Matrix Hypothesis*. This remains much like the previous one, except that a flexibly “extendable” Life of a child is extended into that of a globe-hopping *Inception*-like adult; or linked temporarily with “other people’s: simulations. All these require Computational *robustness* approaching up to that of a full *Matrix*. By Moore’s Law & Nick Bostrom's thesis, such robustness will be attained sooner or later, if Hi-Tech Civilization survives Population-Economy, Climate Change, natural disaster, et.

Then there is the *Macroscopic Matrix Hypothesis* such as Scientific Realism's *Computational Universe* such that that is "all there is." One variation on the latter the *Metaphysical Matrix Hypothesis* whereby some purely "Computational Reality" is "all there could ever be." One such in particular is the *God Matrix Hypothesis* wherein all “physical reality” & all thoughts & perceptions are represented only in the Mind of God. But how would we know this, unless God was in the habit of telling us or we look close enough at the premise to see that it includes the fact that God is us also.

The classic *Malin Genie (evil genius) Hypothesis* which was a "tongue-in-cheek" speculation for Descartes could, in imagination, be taken seriously. Ironically enough, Atheists who are won over to VR Universe logic must adopt just that Hypothesis, placing *Prometheus* – like *aliens* in the role of the *malin genie*. Instead of the Biotech *Prometheus* creation, (identical to intelligence "seeded" from other planets – UFO models) the same could be *Virtual* if "they" be programmers instead of Biologists. In a sense, George Berkeley & various 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> century Theosophical & New Thought schools espouse this version with God as the *alien*.

Chuang-Tzu's *Dream Hypothesis* is a *Matrix* level VR in which we could be a "butterfly" dreaming ourselves to be humans. Like Chuang-Tzu & Morpheus in *The Matrix*, we actually should be asking ourselves: *How do I know that I am not dreaming right now?*

Descartes also included this *Dream Hypothesis* along with the "Vat" story but that was overlooked, being overshadowed by the more shocking "Vat". The *Matrix* movie character Morpheus made that point in our earlier Blog asking:

*Have you ever had a Dream, Neo, that you were so sure was real?*

*What if you were unable to wake from that Dream?*

*How would you know the difference between the Dream World & the real World?*

Chalmers compares all these to Scientific Realism's *Chaos Hypothesis* or random *Computation* or even random Materialist "creation" – the Mechanical Universe of Pure Chance. But "who" invented even Pure Chance & all the rest of Mathematics? The *Computation* version is unlikely, according to Chalmers, but no more so than the random Physical Materialism to which all confirmed Atheists swear allegiance because they can't

deny it. They cannot "stomach" any of the alternatives, & so do not consider them logically & "scientifically" any more than they seriously study UFO's & what have you.

You need not get at it, for you are it.  
It will get at you, if you give it a chance.  
Let go your attachment to the unreal &  
the Real will swiftly & smoothly step into its own.  
Stop imagining yourself being or doing this or that  
& the Realization that you are the Source.

*selection from Nisargadatta's I Am That*

### #40) Looking Back at the Matrix 7:

Before examining more quotes from *The Matrix* movie, we continue to note some of the David Chalmers philosophical Notes on various *Matrix* Hypotheses/

"Twin Earth" & similar thought-experiments refute a host of Realist objections by Hilary Putnam & others when nit-picking details of *The Matrix* movie or the biomechanical—"Vat" in general. More generally, the "Brain in a Vat" or any *Matrix* VR hypothesis can be cast quite independent of limiting technical details. The value of the discussion remains undiminished even if somehow one could prove that the required technology could *never* be realized. The real value of the *Matrix* Hypothesis discussion lies in the metaphorical insights cast on whatever might be our "reality" right now. Questions that skeptical hypotheses raise are more important than their Realism. The Realist should not just repeat, with glib smugness, petty, nit-picking technology objections. However imperfectly the skeptical scenarios provide "realism", each such scenario, as an Analogy, is a half-step for those probing deeper Reality beyond the very Realism & Physicalism being used to criticize them.

The TV show *Law & Order SVU* has courtroom scenes that simply illustrate this conflict-of-interest bias. A family annihilator-Dad, on trial for killing Mom & some kids, for instance, presses a *motion* for custody of a surviving child who will actually be a Witness against him. Parental right has to be denied even if he is out on Bail. He may not harm the child, but probably will tamper with its testimony. & in any case, *he* himself is the cause of the difficulty & cannot play for sympathy as a grieving husband or father. A bit of a far-fetched comparison, admittedly, but Realists cannot solely use "realism" to knock down opposing arguments.

[Absurd as that comparison, the TV show, sounds, it does supposedly arise because spousal homicide is a sizable category in the crime category of Murder. I myself knew 2 stressed-out mutually-married educators who simultaneously shot gunned each other in mutual suicide, fortunately (& unfortunately) leaving the 3 kids in the next room. I was actually not 100% surprised because I experienced the same educator-employer pressures at the time & I too had a hard time with the Principal who stressed both of them out. Anyway, you can't critique another view in an ordinary way if that view consists of denial of the premises by which you critique.]

Realists like Hillary Putnam also object that prior tangible experience must predate VR programming, much as previous sight is sometimes needed for vision-prostheses for the blind. Chalmers notes how this objection rests on a priori assumptions again, assumptions easily refuted. Continuing the above theme, Chalmers further disconnects the hypothetical "Brain in the Vat" state from Putnam's "Causal Theory of Reference" in favor of thoughts, "Vat" stimulated or not, being free to create without comparable tangible experience. Some hard core Realists believe that every thought must have a physical experience upon which it is based. Counter-examples are easily summoned on the most ordinary of terms.

And what if there is no *RWOT*, no "physical experience"? What if ours actually is an *Idealist* Universe with no Matter at all? In general, a *Matrix* "Skeptical Hypothesis" is simply a view that contradicts Scientific Realism. As such it cannot be simply ruled out just because it remains as a possible challenge to any complete certainty regarding the original Realist assumption it contradicts. As a *conjecture* stacked up against an *assumption*, Skeptical vs. Realist respectively, it's a "fair fight" & without a foregone conclusion.

A *Matrix* Hypotheses supports "multiple-mind" conundrums raised by Daniel Dennett & other Realists. One typical scenario-query concerns a Mind-Body clone or a *quantum teleport* xerox copy of oneself to another planet or other location. This is like a Star Trek "beam me up" holo-deck, but only in *Copy* mode instead of *Move*. "Which Me is me?" becomes the dilemma. Anti-computationalists like John Searle & others denying this possibility, affirming only one Mind per individual, but a *Matrix VR* Hypothesis may allow truly multiple copies of an individual. Rather than debates such an issue, *Advaita Vedanta* Non-Duality would rather list all contradictions arising out of "individuality" as arguments against the existence of such "individuality".

Some critics of a *Matrix VR* or "Brain in a Vat" *Idealist* Hypothesis launch "slippery slope" attacks so common in sleazy politics. Just because a given premise can sometime "imply" such & such, this does not refute that premise of hypothesis *per se*. "Implies" is a term that may link many of the viewpoints discussed, but such does not mean *part-for-part* overlap of complimentary models. So a nit-picking criticism cannot be rightfully directed against an Analogy or even a Model that draws some but not all of its support from other models that might be refutable. Not every "slope" is so slippery. The gross example from recent American politics is the argument that *gay marriage* may lead directly to *bestiality*, a ridiculous "slippery slope" indeed.

For whom is *avidya* [ignorance] ? Yes, for the Ego.  
Remove the Ego & *avidya* is gone.  
Look for it, the Ego vanishes &  
the real Self alone remains.  
The Ego professing *avidya* is not to be seen.  
There is no *avidya* in Reality. Ego is not.  
Otherwise do you admit of 2 selves?  
How can there be *avidya* in the absence of the Ego?  
If you begin to Inquire, the *avidya*,  
which is already non-existent, will be found not to be,  
or you will say it has fled away.  
Ignorance pertains to the Ego.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

### #41) Looking Back at the Matrix 8:

[a few more of David Chalmers' notes about Virtual Reality, then *to infinity & beyond!*

A) When comparing models of Reality & Virtual Reality, one does best to proceed in the loosest & most generous manner. Entangling such discussions in technical *minutiae* defeats the clarifying intent. [*Philosopher Daniel N. Robinson & others go so far as to propose than no reading of Philosophy is adequate unless done so “wearing the hat”, that is the viewpoint of the author. Evaluate the theses first from his / her point of view so as to understand the relationship indicated. THEN, if you like, take on your own perspective in order to agree, in full or in part, or completely disagree. Criticism cannot hit the mark without first understanding what you’re criticizing. Tentatively suspend judgment in student mode for the first read-through.*]

B) In addition to the *free-spirited* instead of *mean-spirited*, counterpart-comparison alluded to just above, the very spirit of a VR avatar & world includes corresponding relationships similar to those for characters & Objects in any so-called real-world. Questioning the Ontology of *virtual* objects implies & rests on an exaggerated & unwarranted confidence in the Ontology of Objects & other Things in the mundane Materialist World. Russell, & Kant long before him, reminded Western Philosophy that all of our admirable Science is Phenomenology & tells us nothing about the essence, that is the Ontology of Things in the mundane Materialist World.

C) Materialism & organized religion are alike in the reliance they traditionally have put upon the robust image cast of the World in these ordinary Physicalist conceptions. Until *String Theory*, for instance, & still for the most part, the Matter in the Universe is thought to be built-up of microscopic hard-impenetrable *spheres*. First for the Greeks & Arabs, & again much later in Europe, these constituent *hard spheres* have actually been mathematically modeled, most of the time, by even simpler infinitesimal 0-D Points. The "bottom line" of the points, or small *hard spheres*, has shrunk from Atoms to Nucleons; & then Nucleons to Quarks; now Quarks to 1-D Strings with 2-D & higher



dimension Branes included in the overall picture. Points still “rule” in Physics & even their 1–D *String* & higher cousins are still modeled, at times, as those simple Geometric forms whose substance is Energy. Alternative coherent metaphysical schemes, including *Matrix* hypotheses & Computationalism, therefore easily deserve comparable credibility. This is especially the case when those more abstract models demonstrate at least the Future potential for robust detail. Much complexity comes out in the Numbers, as much or more than in the complexity of constituents.

D) Since our only “contact” with & knowledge of a sense–World is Perceptual–Thought, also conceived by the Mind, that knowledge must ever be subject to comparison with & possible duplications by a World Computationally created. Much the same can be said about Dream or Hallucination. All of these consist of the Mind. Any *Matrix* Hypothesis is just one kind of Computational (*by our own computers*) model of the Universe.

E) Geometrical & other mathematical & structural distinctions between a *Matrix* VR World & the mundane Materialist World would only be subtler, more global nitpicking details within a comparison that need not defeat the overall correspondence between models discussed.

F) *Matrix* & Computational models of the World being discussed stand apart from a broader class of Skeptical hypotheses in that they retain a simple economy of complexity (*in accord with the Occam’s Razor rule of thumb parsimony*) along with robust full-coverage. In comparison, one extreme example of those “other”. less Mind-like, Skeptical hypotheses would be the Materialist's *Chaos Hypothesis* which explains nothing at all. *Random Chance*, *Emergence Epiphenomenalism* are *Chaos Hypotheses*.

### *Confusing Philosophies, Bewildering Science, What’s the Point?*

In your Dream, you live in the West. Few in the East knew how to awaken, fewer ever did so, yet they assured us that all will wake up. When? How? In your Dream West there is only precious little respect for those assurances anyway. Worse yet, words & Dream Thoughts are said to be incapable of dispelling the Dream. But patiently, more powerful clues than this Book ever grace your life & lesser breadcrumbs are being dropped in the forest of Science & Philosophy, the gods worshipped in the West.

Reality has been broadcast to us many times in former, successive Dream Lifetimes wherever we were, with Teaching also “invading” the so-called West. Many of the original philosophies found in the West, both deep & shallow derived from the Wisdom of the Axial Age The prime example was Parmenides. His Teaching, preserved only as scraps, such as those above were called “sheer madness” by Aristotle, the Materialist Rationalist spokesman for the Church & the rest of succeeding Western Civilization. Yet scraps of partial knowledge remained in writings not fully understood.



“Rubbing shoulders” with Parmenides was Empedocles, for instance, who was a fellow vegetarian but who was however diverted toward fame & glory, being praised as a genius, magician, & super-human legend. & still more than 2000 years would pass before revival of his theories about a Great Chain of Being, Evolution & Natural Selection [*all before Aristotle & certainly Wallace & Darwin*]; Atoms [*before the Atomists*]; a Cyclic Universe; Matter as energy, gas, liquid, solid (called the 4 elements); a fixed definite speed of light; Conservation of Energy; compounds forming in Dalton’s later Constant Proportions. Though more thoroughly the “1st scientist” than Thales & prior to Archimedes, our Empedocles still failed to grasp the deeper Wisdom of Parmenides. One imperfect para-phrase emphasizes separate individuals:

Sages, who have learned the *Secret of Life*, are near to the Divine,  
& their spirits, free from the Cycle of Births & Deaths,  
are able to rest in Happiness for Eternity.

attributed by Church Father, Clement of Alexandria, teacher of Origen

It must be granted that Empedocles was no scholar of Advaita Vedanta. As all words are limited, his were especially so by the orientation of Individuality, betraying his likely failure to grasp the actual *Secret of Life* that Parmenides alludes to further above. & yet this simple statement of Empedocles passed unnoticed in the history of the West, as an idiosyncratic curiosity, remaining in the Church Father’s reference, perfectly true in its own terms (QND *Qualified Non-Duality*). That (*to be more profoundly understood*) goal is then exactly that to which the breadcrumbs offered here do indeed lead.

Absolute Truth has been experienced & “simply” reported by many lacking substantial education, by a few very young (*even pre-teen*), & on occasion by defective mentalities, limited by psychological or organic brain dysfunction, & even in some cases, extremely low intelligence (*as that is commonly understood*). Nevertheless, the “ring of Truth” & Wisdom in their humble statements often hints at (but need not prove) their entry into Enlightenment.

Perhaps, the simplest example of self-proof of all, even for less than full Enlightenment, which again was communicated verbally & thus was without epistemological certainty for the listener or reader, would be statements of direct, unmistakable experiences of Divinity. If a hundred times or more, a given seeker had been overwhelmed by such Presence as Guru or God-within, that fortunate seeker can never be dissuaded & soon enters that same bliss-blessedness whether “others” believe or not. No frustration can there be in such a temporary communication-disconnect when the knowledge that “there are no others” is part of the Realization. There are countless ways of tossing these ideas around, & we’ll visit many, with the goal of “game-change” & Self-Knowledge.

Know thyself

γνῶθι σεαυτόν

gnōthe seauton

temet nosce

inscribed at Delphi

adapted Latin, over Oracle’s door in The Matrix

An existing entity does not derive from another that already exists [*it would not need to*]  
 Nor certainly would an existing entity derive from another that does not exist [*how could it ?*]  
 What does not exist clearly does not derive from another that likewise does not exist.  
 Nor would what does not exist derive from another that does exist [*no becoming or emergence*]  
 Essence does not derive from Cause or Condition.  
 Such would not be natural nor understandable.  
 The essential nature of the Real is neither created  
 Nor could it depend on something else.  
 What exists in its own right cannot cease to exist,  
 For change of essential nature is not logically possible.  
 Essential nature is neither born nor does it cease.

aniruddham anutpannam ashunyam tad bhavishyati

Nagarjuna

*Matrix Dream* – we quickly go on to other stories, but we do start out with a movie from a while back, *The Matrix*. Not because it was a great movie, or not a great movie, but because it serves to make a specific point. The movie’s protagonist Neo is instructed by Morpheus, (deity of dreams), who serves as his teacher, not quite a guru. But Morpheus is the best “guru” we & Neo get in this movie. He questions Neo as to what is real? Pointing to objects, Morpheus asks whether Neo believes in the reality of what he sees, or touches? Are these not only electrical signals in the brain? Indeed, Neo never physically contacts a chair or visually records a chair, for instance. Neo only reacts to electrical signals traveling through sense nerves of vision & touch.

He never directly contacts the objects despite his senses. This is especially the case in that movie scene since they are dialoging within a Virtual Reality. Morpheus unfortunately does not go the next step & question Neo outside of the VR, Virtual Reality training program. Morpheus spares the audience or the box-office the embarrassment of asking the exact same questions in the “physical world.” Morpheus stops short of asking Neo about his knowledge of the physical objects, & more importantly, the physical Brain & the electrical signals themselves. What does he know about these, & how does he know of them? If he is a surgeon, coroner, gross anatomist, & so on, he may have touched a brain & some nerves but not the electrical signal directly. More likely, all of Neo’s knowledge about brain & nerve signals comes from books & films & teachers, which means images he has seen & words he has heard. In other words, Brain & electrical signals again circularly inform Neo about themselves.

Prior to any possibility of such a physical-world dialogue, Neo has been identifying himself with an *avatar* in a programmed multi-character Virtual Reality called *The Matrix*. Morpheus tells Neo that no one can just tell you what the *Matrix* is. Each must discover this truth for himself. Morpheus “liberates” Neo’s Body when he extracts it from the Vat & Neo’s Mind when he extracts it from *The Matrix*. Morpheus convinces Neo that his former avatar in that Virtual Reality is unreal. But back in the “real world” Morpheus neglects to apply the same reasoning & experience to realize that such a “real

world” is just as mind-fabricated as *The Matrix* is a computer creation. Neo’s character & Morpheus’ own character can be just as unreal as is their “real world” bodies, just like in their *Matrix avatars*.

Morpheus did go on to question Neo about Dreams, asking: have you ever been in a Dream so real that you could not tell whether he was awake or dreaming? Even less-convincing Dreams are telling. It matters little whether a given Dream is almost as vivid or just as consistent as waking life experience. In both “worlds”, Dream & Waking, we identify with a corporeal individual in a World of objects, matter & energy, extended in Space & evolving in Time. Suddenly finding ourselves in the midst of a Dream, we speak the language, know others & are known by others. Generally, none of those other characters, nor any book or film we might encounter in the Dream will question the Dream or support our own character in challenging the Dream. Should our Dream character begin to wonder, he is an candidate for awakening from the Dream. Should any media assist in that, it would be like a scripture. Another character guiding him out would be like a guru. The Dream ends when known to be Dream. In all these ways, the parallel between Waking State experience & nightly Dream, or even daydream, is an exact correspondence. It matters not that there is a difference in degree of vividness or consistency, Waking & all Dream states are structurally identical in kind, & both are much like *The Matrix* program.

The old accusation was that Descartes implied that God “was mean enough” to fool & trick us with an appearance World. But that is no longer the Vat issue in college classrooms, but Technology remains the focus, some unthinkable technology that is equivalent to the fictional code programmed by the evil AI computers in the *Matrix* movie. Beyond those perennial man-hating machines, the focus comes closer to home in fascinating but long irrelevant discussions as to whether Computer programming of VR, Virtual Reality could ever be as robust as depicted in The Matrix movie. But ultimately, the robustness of the technology, easier for Descartes to magically ascribe to a God or to a *malin genie*, remains still questionable for IT, Information Technology. But information-technology, is still only the *Finger*, the pointing & not the point, not the *Moon*. As in Descartes’ time, the Vat that reappears in *The Matrix* movie & some Philosophy courses is about Idealism – rejecting or appreciating Idealism. But then erudite discussion still goes on to get bogged down in the irrelevant details of Technology. *Red herrings* tossed in for distraction by those who consider Idealism only as in the cliché: That dog won’t hunt.

Look at the net & its many **contradictions**.  
You do & undo at every step.  
You want peace, love, **happiness**  
& work hard to create pain.  
See your net as made of such **contradictions**  
& remove them – your very seeing  
will make them go.

*selection from Nisargadatta's I Am That*

## #42) Looking Back at the Matrix 9:

When the good VR-themed Canadian TV series *Harsh Realm* aired a week before *The Matrix* debuted, that TV series was swamped out by the much higher production values & budget of the blockbuster movie. The VR–World created *on the cheap* within the *Harsh Realm* story was largely overlooked. But the rock-em-sock-em *Matrix* was just believable enough to impress on millions, or perhaps a billion, for the first time, that *Idealism* could be plausible. Many adults & adolescents got it right for the 1<sup>st</sup> time: there could be a digital-like mental VR Illusion robust enough to fool us into taking it to be the everyday World, to be something it wasn't. Perhaps this World is more like other things I dream & imagine. How could anyone ever know?

The point was ever, not that an actual technological trick had been foisted on us, but that the "World" we now accept could be somehow "Virtual" in a more Metaphysical way. Understandably though, a lively discussion of the required futuristic Computing power & Mathematical possibilities necessarily ensued in the general public & media, as it would in the Philosophy classrooms. But for many, not expert in Philosophy or Computer Engineering, there was no such secondary focus on the Finger that indicated Analogy. Many did not know or care from techno-virtual or whatever. All they knew now was that they could in no way independently *verify* the "factual reality" of their own World. It could "look" real but yet might not be real.

Thus instead of focusing on the indicating "Finger", many saw that the proverbial "Moon", the whole point of the movie. Here was a powerful suggestion that the testimony of the Senses is without foundation. Whether there is a *RWOT* (*real-world-out-there*) or not, there is no knowing in that way, by mere appearance in the Sense.

For many, not expert in Philosophy or the current limits of Computer power & time: they could imagine such VR Illusion that was robust enough to fool us. The *Matrix* protagonist Neo formerly lived as an envatted prisoner pacified by a dream-life. He self-identified as a virtual *avatar* within a computer program, a Virtual–World, called *The Matrix*. For this virtual Body named Thomas Anderson, virtual Life seemed just so very "real." There was so much drama, so much to see, it feels so "real," sounds so "real." The tastes & smells, the people & events of a lifetime, the good, the bad, & the ugly, cannot but be "real." "Seeing is believing," is it not? One of the movie's other devices happened

to be an overlay religious references, along with mythological & other cultural references, in the names of characters & so on.

*Wake up Neo the Matrix really does have you!*

Out of his WYSIWYG *what-you-see-is-what-you-get* Naïve Realism Neo begins to awaken when his computer is hacked remotely & startles him with a wake-up call:

*Wake up Neo, the Matrix has you.*

*If you want to know, follow the White Rabbit.*

Neo is intrigued enough to follow whatever “white rabbit” that might show up. Like “bread crumbs” for the fairy-tale Hansel & Gretel, the White Rabbit led Alice in Wonderland to her discovery. Chatting later with visitors, Neo himself inevitably scans the appearance of an attractive girl & notices a White Rabbit pin on her leather jacket. She & her friends invite him to what seems like a low-key *rave* at which another attractive woman spots him & brings her conversation around to *The Matrix*. So by a happenstantial, but predictable set-up, Neo is lead to further knowledge.

To Neo this *rave* girl Trinity begins his education.

*It's the question that brought you here. You know the question just as I did.*

*What is the Matrix?* says Neo.

*The answer is out there, Neo. It's looking for you.*

*And it will find you, if you want it to.*

That last statement could almost have been lifted word for word from Nisargadatta Maharaj's *I Am That*.

Meanwhile, Neo is led toward his own “guru” Morpheus, (*name for the Greek deity of Dreams*), as is also true for the pharmaceutical “morphine”. The female fellow-disciple-to-be advises:

*Let me give you one piece of advice. Be honest.*

*He knows more than you can imagine.*

Not bad so far for a Hollywood guru. When attempting to depict a real guru like Ramana Maharshi for instance, we see that Hollywood has not done so this well. Anyway, Neo is eventually brought to meet his “guru” though that term is not used in the movie. The only Indian man appearing in the trilogy happens to be a Logical Positivist with a touch of Krishnamurti tossed in, & is a non-human program at that. It is clarifying to note that just like incidental contact with that later “Indian” program, all of Neo's “enlightening” dialogue with Morpheus begins in VR & continues during deliberate returns to VR for it is in VR that their battle primarily lies. Outside of VR

Morpheus functions primarily as a war-chief, so an inversion is apparent. It is inside *The Matrix* that all of the more “spiritual” lessons are learned.

Yet, without you there can be  
neither perception nor imagination.  
You observe the mind feeling, thinking, the body acting.  
The very act of perceiving shows that  
you are not what you perceive.  
Can there be perception, experience without you?  
An experience must "belong".  
Somebody must come & declare it as his own.  
Without an experienter the experience is not real.  
It is the experienter that imparts reality to experience.

selection from Nisargadatta's *I Am That*

### #43) Looking Back at the Matrix 10:

When Morpheus reveals to Neo: the *Desert of the Real*

Outside of *The Matrix* VR program, is a futuristic dystopic, post-holocaust “reality”, which is purely Physical "world" the Morpheus calls the *Desert of the Real* (one of the tributes to Baudrillard's *Simulacra*, which book is shown being read in the movie). The pessimism is logical enough & Baudrillard's is my favorite within my least favorite school of Philosophy, French Post-Modernism. The only real problem of course is that neither Morpheus, nor anyone else, continues the Inquiry into Perception that denied the reality of *The Matrix* & the crews VR Training Programs. That same Inquiry into Perception could no longer rely on a BIV (*brain in vat*) support, but the *skeptical* validity remains intact. As for the movie, the *Desert of the Real* plays host to a cool *rave* dance & mostly uninspired war-stories. Some of that occurs within *The Matrix*, but even then, Kung-Fu holds its own with automatic small arms fire. Such is not so in physical reality.

But back inside VR, prior to Neo's physical "liberation", Morpheus reprises the *Alice in Wonderland* theme, saying:

"I imagine, right now, you must be feeling a bit like Alice, tumbling down the Rabbit Hole?"

When Neo agrees, Morpheus explains to Neo, that his new openness in following the wake-up message, the *White Rabbit* hint, & summons to Morpheus, when he comments:

"I can see it in your eyes.

You've the look of a man who accepts what he sees because he is expecting to wake up."

Whether accident or artistic insight of rare depth, this usually overlooked statement does quite well to reflect real spiritual Enlightenment stories. One who has no concept of



awakening, no "strong thought for enlightenment", could easily, according to the proverbial saying: "pass a returning Jesus on the street & not recognize him." On the other hand, one who genuinely yearns for Liberation will find, will recognize, will follow, & will realize when the brightest genius (*see the Smolin quotes in the next Matrix segment*) & most worldly-wise sees nothing there.

We need never be surprised when the very smartest fail to see what some simple but pure-hearted "expecting" folk might see & give themselves to. Contrariwise, conceptual thinking renders the smartest worldly person quite dull in matters transcendent.

Referring to the sequence of extraordinary events that followed the wake-up call, Morpheus alludes to the process as a kind of magic. This is a lead up to challenging the reality of their "World" which as *The Matrix* is clearly unreal VR. But Neo objects to that characterization & says it isn't any kind of magic. Then Morpheus pursues the point to get Neo to consider the special situation he is in, saying:

"How else would you describe what has been happening to you?  
We are trained in this World to accept only what is 'rational' & 'logical'.  
Have you ever wondered why?  
As children, we do not separate the possible from the impossible  
which is why the younger a Mind is the easier it is to FREE  
while a Mind like yours can be very difficult."

Actually, maturity only helps the attainment of Self-Knowledge for ourselves. Though Absolute Truth already available & sometimes realized in youth, there is a balance not mentioned in the movie. Youth & age both have advantages & disadvantages. Yet the point is well taken that "child-like" flexibility of Mind is important, but not the reckless version common in adolescence. Even more rare is the survival of child-like openness in one older. Neo then asks the very good question:

"'Free' from what?"

Defining clearly the actual Goal that can be vaguely intended by the term "Liberation from bondage". But what is an oft-overlooked essential in our own lives, is clear defining of the spiritual goal. But in the movie Neo gets his answer:

"Freedom from *The Matrix*.  
Do you want to know what *The Matrix* is, Neo?  
You're here because you know something.  
What you know you can't explain.  
But you feel it. You've felt it your entire life.  
That there's something wrong with the 'World'.  
You don't know what it is but it's there,  
like a splinter in your Mind, driving you mad, driving you to me.

But what is it? Do you know what I'm talking about?"

This again sounds a bit like Nisargadatta Maharaj, & as an initial guru-disciple dialogue, this blows all other Hollywood standards far out the water. Morpheus goes on:

"*The Matrix* is everywhere, it's all around us, here even in this room.

You can see it out your window, or on your television.

You feel it when you go to work, or go to church or pay your taxes.

It is the World that has been pulled over your eyes to blind you from the Truth.

What 'truth'? That you are a slave, Neo.

That you, like everyone else, were born into bondage,

kept inside a prison that you cannot smell, taste, or touch. a Prison for your Mind."

Take from the movie the robot-badguys, but this bit of grim summary is somewhat on the mark. Easily improved, a version that the movie did not use could have been: & a substitute more accurate would be:

"Prison ... in your Mind"

"Prison ... that is your Mind"

Numerous other corrections come to mind throughout, but hey, it's only a movie! In the hindsight of later decades, this film is likely to be credited with a seminal influence on deeper spiritual renewal comparable to a book that is 2<sup>nd</sup> only to the Bible for publications in English (& *many other languages for both of course*). The Bible ranks Number 1 but Number 2 actually happens to be that imperfect yet entertaining somewhat spiritual vehicle called *Remember, Be Here Now*. Such attractions, despite imperfections, can be useful options in the very beginning, arousing spiritual interest. For that sometimes pivotal moment in human history, such "entertainments" may have their place. Like the attractive girl who led Neo to notice the White Rabbit button & so on, a trivial *hint* can be important.

Suffering, on the other hand, can also lead one to take stock & reconsider the purpose of Life before encountering any such *hints*. Morpheus continues by saying that he cannot take it further at this point. Not with mere words. Direct Experience is essential.

"Unfortunately, no one can be told what the Matrix is. You have to see it for yourself.

Morpheus adds other useful statements in here like:

"Neo, Time is always against us."

The point is well taken, as advised by true Sages who will tell us that Life is uncertain & Death comes unexpectedly. There is no Time to lose in striving for true Enlightenment. Another comment ironically needs an inverting follow-up:

"Remember that all I am offering is the Truth. Nothing more."

At face value, the statement does actually remain excellent. Spiritual Truth promises spiritual advantage. It need not hurt in worldly affairs, & may help, but there is no guaranteed application in those other contexts. But in the movie, Morpheus means the “real” physical World which is miserably wrecked, the *Desert of the Real*. This highlights the terribly incomplete “liberation” that the movie offers to its characters, liberation from out of a Virtual Reality dream, but back into a Body caught in an especially miserable “physical” World. But so long as we rightfully take it all to be a useful Analogy, this media metaphor has some value.

But when a real offer of Truth leads to Blissful Immortality, that’s plenty enough, & the “nothing more” statement is an irrelevant comment anyway. The movie characters, however, are left only to find nobility in grim Physical Realism. How brave perhaps, but how needlessly foolish also. We can do better than to be noble, grim, suffering warriors.

The funnier irony interprets a statement like that of Morpheus as a let-down for misguided spiritual aspirants in this World who vainly imagine that Enlightenment will bring to them *en route* or at least upon accomplishment, a full Christmas list of wealth, fame, admiration, sex appeal, health, beauty, cleverness, & so on. Unless some of that almost accidentally proves to be the case, the “partially enlightened” who compare to the “partially pregnant” or “partially dead” may seek some of those auxiliary “rewards” by a role they at least initially rationalize as a *well-meaning but premature spiritual teacher*.

Spiritual insight, even if partial, should over time cause an admission of that mistake (*premature teaching*), & in rare cases it does, but not usually. "Stapling" Ego to one's spiritual search like that will freeze progress at that point, & decline can follow.

For others, Worldly life in this real “matrix” of one’s own Mind should not get any worse for pursuing Enlightenment, but specific advantages cannot be counted on. Liberation from this unreal World brings no special unreal rewards *en route* or at the Finish Line. But then none would really be needed or especially wanted. But for those starting out with the more deluded misconception, the advice of Morpheus may happen to apply. *"Remember that all I am offering is the Truth. Nothing more."*

In any case, the experience offered to Neo involves using their own Virtual Reality apparatus to train against evil. The intention to use their own "Artificial Intelligence" AI, prompts Morpheus to ask:

"If the *Virtual Reality* apparatus, as you called it, was wired to all of your Senses & controlled them completely, would you be able to tell the difference between the Virtual World & the ‘real’ World ?"

Morpheus thus wisely compares this to *The Matrix* bondage Neo does not yet fully understand. Not a bad Analogy for Hollywood movie, & it certainly brings out verbally, the point of the movie for any in the audience who “have ears to hear”, as a Thomas

Anderson's namesake rightly phrased it of old. (*in the Gospel of Thomas*). Neo is a virtual *avatar* of a fictional character in a celluloid or digital movie about "Neo" being imprisoned in a *Virtual Reality*, now about to escape by deliberately using another "training" *Virtual Reality*. That situation is nested about 4 levels deep, but a 5<sup>th</sup> is the *virtual real life* of each audience member, while a 6<sup>th</sup> begins when one sees that movie, or reads an essay like this one.

Audience originally watched all this "imprisoned" in a movie theater in what Descartes & Idealists suggest is an unreal "World." Got it ? Now what ? Well for Neo its an *Alice red pill* & Alice's *Looking Glass* (copied in Cocteau's *Orpheus Mirror*), & temporary return to the Vat for "Liberation" of his envatted Body. This "freedom" seems a bit in the wrong direction.

To give the movie "poetic license" or "benefit of the doubt", we could compare this to awakening, from dream or deep delusion in the mundane sense, to seeking Enlightenment with clarity in the "physical" Waking State. Upon initial "liberation" of his Body (*instead of from his Body*) Neo is further trained with some home-made tame VR Training programs. Within one of these the instructional dialogue picks up again when Neo touches "furniture" in some unusual, VR space. This is an innocuous but not very comforting White Space In this *Training Program*, Morpheus & Neo find themselves amid a few pieces of furniture. As mentioned in an earlier segment, Neo touches the furniture & asks:

"This isn't real ?"

Morpheus responds with this already good movie's very best lines:

"What is Real ? How do you define Real ?

If you're talking about your Senses, what you Feel, Taste, Smell, or See, then all you're talking about are Electrical Signals interpreted by your Brain."

This is the simplest & most direct statement of George Berkeley's *Subjective Idealist Empiricism*. [*Objective Idealism is that of Plato & Josiah Royce whose absolute version has only 1 Seer; while Kant's Transcendental Idealism retains Materialism dualistically; & the Absolute Idealism of Hegel & Bradley mentally reflect some Non-Duality*].

It is enough to **know** what you are not.  
You need not **know** what you are.  
For as long as **knowledge** means description in terms  
of what is already **known**, perceptual, or conceptual,  
there can be no such thing as self-**knowledge**,  
for what you are cannot be described,  
except as total negation.  
All you can say is: "I am not this, I am not that".  
You cannot meaningfully say "this is what I am".  
It just makes no sense. What you can point out as  
"this" or "that" cannot be yourself.  
Surely, you can not be "something" else.  
You are nothing perceivable, or imaginable.

*selection from Nisargadatta's I Am That*

### #44) Looking Back at the Matrix 11:

After a bit of melodrama, Morpheus goes on to say:

"We do not free a Mind once it reaches a certain age."

That again can be a fairly plausible statement in the fantastical context of this movie. Ever again the real spiritual point would not be chronological age, but rather the child-like flexibly remaining or recoverable in the Mind versus the fossilization of the same. Flexibility can vanish quickly in the young as well. Then again in the New Age phrase "old soul", there remains a hint that Body age is not the issue for the bodiless.

To introduce yet a sillier movie example, consider the far less consistent *Highlander* movies. For one thing, such mention is an occasion to decry that *The Matrix* remains a Kung-Fu & small-arms movie, just as the *Highlander* is an earlier *Brave heart* & Western Samurai movie. Nobility, grace, honor, & so on supposedly elevate the combat a bit, but violence it remains. But what is interesting about the *Highlander* is an emotional *euphoria* that distinctly comes across at the prospect of being *immortal*, however inconsistent & partial be his so-called immortality.

He was born as a Body, grew up, & then does not age very quickly, but does age somewhat. Clearly his more ancient friend, the Sean Connery character is after thousands of years, clearly more aged. Any Body that ages will die eventually of old age, even if centuries or millennia go by first. But of course, the *Highlander* can also be beheaded, & his body can be exploded or crushed, dropped from great height or burned, & so on.

His immortality is actually modified mortality, one with super-wound-healing qualities like the *X-Men's* mutant Wolverine. But with all these conditions, we do catch the sense of relief, or great fortunate blessing, a real "high" that the *Highlander* emotes at the recognition of his special nature & repeated remembrance of the same. How much more elation & gratitude would greet the Self-Realization of true Immortality, true relief &

fortunate blessing. Every Body will die, but the bodiless Consciousness cannot die. Love & companionship can wax & wane, but being pure Love itself, one is never really alone, as the sole Existence inseparable from the All, far luckier than the Highlander.

In any case, Morpheus had made the comment about physically & then mentally “liberating” Neo because he is to be the redeeming “One” – such being the nonsense of primitive desert religions & not an important aspect of the movie. More interesting are the continuing comments of Morpheus about the advantages of a child-like Mind, that is to say, in terms of the opposite to a fossilized Mind:

" They (*older minds*) have trouble letting go. Their Mind turns against them. "

Taken in the right way, here is another insightful statement about dense resistance & rigid fossilization. When Mind is taken to emphasize Ego, then it can turn *against* the under-prepared by “allergic” reaction to higher spiritual Truth that challenges that same Ego. These are the special defenses appointed by System Theory as the rationale for the temporary stability of a given System. Every existent system will have defenses against its own undoing, with Ego being no exception. If the System had no such defenses it would have succumbed to some kind of change at an earlier point in time. Now as opportunity arises, Morpheus continues with some fantastic instruction:

"Have you ever had a Dream, Neo, that you were so sure was real.  
What if you were unable to wake from that Dream?  
How would you know the difference between the Dream & this world?  
Your appearance now is what we call residual self image.  
It exists now only as part of a neural-interactive simulation that we call *The Matrix*.  
You've been living the Dream world, & the real World?  
It is the mental projection of your self, in a Dream–World, Neo. "

During other training, virtual “bodily” effort leaves Neo’s temporary *avatar* breathing heavily, so then Morpheus asks:

"Do you believe that's air you are breathing now. "

Morpheus rightly challenges the VR as being no kind of *RWOT*. Sadly the skepticism he casts against *The Matrix* does not apply equally to his *all-too-readily* accepted “*desert of the Real*.” Are the movie-makers backing off to retain audience? Are they leaving that further conclusion to the audience? Or do they just not get it, blinded by those special defenses of the Ego?

Back to “*breathing air*”, the realization that the “*air*” is virtual sensation, not reality, of course applies to the Body that breathes it, the place & time, room, World, & other people. Morpheus continues with a sub-theme that concerns us little more than “the One” *Redeemer* theme (*which undemocratically leaves all others unable to aspire so high*).



That other theme is the “*mind over matter*” miracle-working power that, like Kung-Fu, gets tangled up with Wisdom, as if some embodiment, proof, demonstration, or “functioning” of Wisdom. “*Unless they see signs & wonders, they will not believe.*” Fine, but if they see such & believe, just what do they believe in? The “One” again?

Skepticism about the *RWOT* is more to our point. Training in a more complex “*crowded street scene*” Program, Morpheus comments on the other virtual *avatars* on the street, the presumed other people. He warns Neo against unwisely attempting to “*liberate*” a prospect before that one is ready to awaken.

"That system (*The Matrix*) is our enemy. But when you're inside, you look around. What do you see? The very Minds of the people we are trying to save. But until we do, these people are still a part of that system, ... You have to understand, most of these people are not ready to be unplugged. And many of them are so inert, so hopelessly dependent on the system that they will fight to protect it."

Given the nature of this combat movie, the overly adversarial tone is at least consistent. Applied correctly & specific to each given context, some caution can be wise. Premature teaching or preaching is never good for either side of a dialogue anyway. Moreover, forcing the “*words*” upon one not ready only wears out the “*freshness*” of the words when they might be more effective at a later point. The resistance of the premature can actually be relatively dangerous in the “*physical*” World. Even great teachers have been threatened, some slain, crucified, & so on. Hence the advice about not prematurely arousing the “*sleeper*”. “*Let sleeping dogs lie*” applies to the dense & impenetrable who can better listen later on.

On the polar opposite of the “*dense*”, there is also the “*agitated*”, about whom came old advice like: “*Cast not your pearls before swine, lest they gobble them up & then go on to tear you up as well.*” Throughout the film, there also comes from time to time the repeated refrain, best taken as: “*The Matrix isn't real.*”

Morpheus eventually brings Neo to another teacher, a *program* called the Oracle. She provides an insight into how one “*knows*” that one has reached a given degree of Freedom, in terms of what it is like to “*be the One.*”.

"I'm going to let you in on a little secret. It is just like being in Love. No one can tell you you're in Love, you just know it, through & through."

Reviewing such a movie is worthwhile. There is no World, nor any VR version of it, but seeing that its appearance “*could be*” VR or is *metaphysically* weakens the Illusion.

All your problems are your **Body's** problems –  
all these lose their meaning the moment  
you realize that you may not be a mere **Body**.  
Go deep into the sense of "I am" & you will find.  
How do you find a thing you have mislaid or forgotten?  
You keep it in your mind until you recall it.  
The sense of **Being**, of "I am" is the first to emerge.  
Ask yourself whence it comes, or just watch it quietly.  
All you need to do is try & try again.  
After all the sense "I am" is always with you,  
only you have attached all kinds of things to it –  
**Body**, feelings, thoughts, ideas, possessions etc.  
All these self-identifications are misleading.  
Because of them you take yourself to be what you are not.

*selection from Nisargadatta's I Am That*

### #45) Looking Back at the Matrix 12:

Comparing the "**red pill**" in *The Matrix* to another "**red pill**":

The "**red pill**" in *The Matrix* movie is swallowed (as in *Alice in Wonderland*) to embark on a surreal "trip". The alternative "**blue pill**" would initiate Neo's voluntary return to the VR program, *The Matrix*, for good.

But the "**red pill**" – in *The Matrix* movie also somewhat contrasts with & echoes the decade older sci-fi movie *Total Recall* (different & given lower production values, perhaps better than the O.K. re-make) starring the not-so recent California governor. The movie's protagonist is strapped into a electronic-device chair rigged to induce into his mind an extended *Lucid Dream*, an inner VR adventure, appropriately called an "*Ego Trip*". He presumably will not leave the chair for some minutes but will experience in his mind weeks of the adventure whose elements he chose from this company's VR catalogue of customized adventures. Without actually going anywhere he will leave the chair with a full set of cherished memories of the weeks of adventure. But alas, something goes "*wrong*" & the device misfires somehow he is released from the chair & assured they will make repairs so he can try again the next day. The obvious question, at least in retrospect, is whether the failure-repair story is actually just the beginning of the *Lucid Dream* the device is actually working as it should. This becomes more probable as succeeding events actually play out the chosen adventure with a dream-girlfriend identical to the one he picked out. At one point or another his dream character is rebelling frantically within the *Lucid Dream*, but that would actually fit the adventure genre. To supposedly calm him down a *dream*–"doctor" appears with a "**red pill**" for him to swallow, but he isn't willing to do so. By way of convincing him, the Doctor's argument goes as follows:

"It's difficult to explain ...This will be hard for you to accept ...You're not really standing here now. ... You're not here neither am I ... You're strapped into an implant chair ... I'm monitoring you from the psycho-probe console."

The "Governator: (*Terminator elected California governor Schwarzenegger*) responds:

"Ah, I get it. I'm dreaming. all this is part of the delightful vacation your company has sold me. "

"Not exactly. What you're experiencing is a free-form delusion based on our memory tapes .... but you're inventing it yourself as you go along."

"If it is my illusion, who invited you ?"

"I've been artificially implanted as an emergency measure. I'm sorry to tell you this, but you've suffered a schizoid embolism. We can't snap you out of your fantasy... I've been sent in to try to talk you down. ... Think about it. Your Dream started in the middle of the implant procedure. Everything after that – ... Your whole life is ahead of you. But you've got to want to return to reality. ... Swallow this PILL. It's a symbol of your desire to return to reality. ..."

"All right, let's say you're telling the truth this is all a Dream. Then I could pull this trigger & it won't matter. ..."

"It won't make a difference to me. But the consequences to you would be devastating. In your mind I'll be dead. With no one to guide you out, you'll be stuck in permanent psychosis. ... The walls of reality will come crashing down. ... So get a grip on yourself, ... put down that gun! Good. Now take the pill & put it in your mouth. Swallow it ! "

But at this point the Governator sees a drop of nervous perspiration on the Doctor's brow. Quickly figuring that this sign of *fear* contradicts the doctor's claim to some official transcendent status within the supposed Dream, the Governator fires. We never get to know for sure, but the Doctor probably had it right. This itself is an interesting instance of the Governator (*or anyone*) using irrelevant details used to evaluate a source of Wisdom. If not good-looking enough, or not having a smile that is sweet enough, any Guru's words of Wisdom may foolishly be disregarded. Other extraneous details & events get dragged in to force the Sage to fit the listening individual's pre-conception, or not fit it.

The "*red pill*" referred to in the older *Total Recall* movie is actually more like the "*back to the mundane*" *blue pill* in *The Matrix* movie which the protagonist refused there as well. Fearful desirable entities in a nightly or waking Dream that come out of the Mind of the dreamer actually can actually be "symbolism" (*as the Doctor claimed*), only some of which is readily comprehensible. Again, with all due respect, a key comparison is to be found in the Doctor's statement: "*It's a symbol of your desire to return to reality.*"

Both the "Doctor's" apparent Dream form & also the physical form of the Guru are likewise symbols of *your desire to return to Reality*. That Dream or physical form of the

Guru is no more real than your own. The true *essence* of the Guru, however, is the Non-Dual Self, the Absolute which is thus supremely Real. The Guru is the first to deny that the visual impression of a separate Dream or physical Guru body is other than illusion. So much more foolish is it to evaluate Wisdom by the illusory “physical” appearance of its source. Sweaty brow or not, the Dream “doctor” theoretically may have had the Governor’s best interest in mind.

In Non-duality, Meditation may be regarded as by the Self, for there is no other Knower, & upon the Self, since there is no Object of the Meditation. In Meditation upon Self-Knowledge, one cannot stand apart from the Self to contemplate upon Self-Knowledge.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

### #46) Looking Back at the Matrix 13:

Our World *metaphysically* resembles VR, *Virtual Reality* which is a “world” clearly composed of electrical signals in a computer, just as our waking World is virtually fabricated by electrical signals in nerve fibers & the Brain (*but the Brain & nerves are part of the illusion as well – more of a "vicious cycle" than VR for which the hosting Computer is "outside" of the Program*). By *metaphysically* is meant that no literal electrical apparatus, etc. is suggested. Rather closer to the BIV *brain in vat* of Descartes, our VR “world” is “magically” fabricated, but not by a *malin genie* imagined in the Descartes skeptical speculation. The ridiculous *malin genie* (*though used again by James Clerk Maxwell in describing Entropy*) was simply judicious political (& *liturgical*) cover for Descartes. The “fabricator” he suggested was God & his obvious ruse was transparent to the many detractors who accused Descartes of blasphemy. “God would never be so “tricky” (*smarter than us*) as to fool us that way. Why not? Is “creation” of “matter” out of “nothing” less contrived?

Bishop George Berkeley & the current Turkish publisher Harun Yahya likewise leave God in the role of the “programmer”. The ridiculous political (& *liturgical*) cover for both of these (*separated as they are by many centuries*) is that God *also* “created matter out of nothing” to leave a “real world”, that we can never contact, standing by, “just in case” – as a *template* for God’s “programming”. Why imagine such an extreme & unprovable contrivance (*like the Multi-Verse*)? Political (& *liturgical*) cover perhaps. The *Multi-Verse* is *anti-liturgical* “cover” for the obdurate Atheism of most scientists these days (*unlike the more spiritual fore-fathers running Science when Relativity & Quantum Mechanics were invented, as well as Classical Physics & Electro-dynamics*).

A comparable VR movie, *Vanilla Sky*, has actor Kurt Russell's character clearly depicted as let down & angry when he finds out, that like the angry, envying Agent Smith in *The Matrix*, each is a VR character only, with no physical counter-part outside *The Matrix*. They envy Neo, or *Vanilla Sky's* Tom Cruise's character.

Such irrational being "let down & angry" characterizes almost everyone these days (*atheist or religious*) who hears of the BIV or any other skeptical hypothesis. They're angry not because they believe it, but are angry just hearing it mentioned. So the persecution of Descartes in his olden days is not so surprising. Such is the fierce attachment that un-enlightened "individual" have to their imagined Individuality.

If someone concedes that all Perceptions are formed in the Brain, but still assumes that one can step "out" of this world of Perceptions & have them confirmed by the "real" external World, this reveals limited, distorted reasoning.

Berkeley's irrefutable *Idealism* is however capable of being grasped by anyone of normal understanding & reasoning. On the other hand, it is proverbial among students of Non-Duality, that Ego-concepts cloud the Intellect, regardless of that person's recorded IQ.

Any unbiased person should be able to understand that it isn't possible for one's Senses to reach an external World. But blind adherence to Atheistic Materialism or literalist / fundamental Religion distorts one's reasoning capability. The "great" intellectual, Samuel Johnson, mocked Berkeley when, in front of him, he kicked a stone & complained of the toe pain that "*proved the World is real.*" That is so "*dumb*" as to be absurd. If the World is unreal, so would be the stone, the kick, & the pain. Johnson proved nothing that way.

We end this segment with a similar statement from a valuable Science author (& *theoretical physicist himself, probably at "genius" level*).

### "Motivating the Hard Work Needed "

[protest against the Consciousness-created Quantum Reality, the most successful Physics since Newton & Einstein]

“One problem that has bedeviled the Quantum Theory from the beginning is the question of the relationship between Reality & the Formalism. Physicists have traditionally expected that Science should give an account of Reality *as it would be in our absence*. Physics should be more than a set of formulas that predict what we will observe in an experiment; it should give a picture of what Reality *is*. We are accidental descendants of an Ancient Primate, who appeared only very recently in the history of the World. It cannot be that Reality depends on our Existence. Nor can the problem of no observers be solved by raising the possibility of *Alien Civilizations*, for there was a time when the World existed but was far too hot & dense for organized intelligence to exist.”

[That’s already an embarrassing statement for a smart man to put in print, but it goes on.]

“Philosophers call this view *Realism*. It can be summarized by saying that the *Real World Out There* (or *RWOT*, as my first philosophy teacher used to put it) must exist independently of us. It follows that the



terms by which Science describes Reality cannot involve in any essential way what we choose to measure or not measure. ...[I actually love much of his Science, his Philosophy, & writing.]

It is possible that Realism as a philosophy will simply die off, but this seems unlikely. After all, Realism provides the *motivation driving* most scientists. For most of us, belief in the RWOT & the possibility of truly knowing it motivates us to *do the hard work needed* to become a scientist & contribute to the understanding of Nature.”

Lee Smolin, *The Trouble with Physics*

[Must a *preference*, that "best motivates us to go to work", explain the Universe ?]

You must not go back, undo,  
uproot, abandon the conquered  
ground. **Tenacity** of purpose &  
**honesty** in pursuit will bring you  
to your goal.

*selection from Nisargadatta's I Am That*

### #47) Looking Back at the Matrix 14:

Why assume a *RWOT* that can never be known or proven? The usual response comes back in terms of 3 major counterpoints:

I) *Consistency* experienced on the basis of taking a *RWOT* for granted seems strong evidence in itself, & what is the alternative? No plausible contender, they say. Ah! But there is, one far more plausible when one examines both “*hypotheses*” very carefully, much more carefully than 99% of humanity ever does. Nick Herbert in *Quantum Reality* states that Physics points to a heretofore unknown *Deep Reality* & if that does exist there just “*has to be a way to experience it.*” Indeed there is. One alternative to a *RWOT* can be directly experienced. Moreover, deep flaws & contradictions do come to light anyway when *Physical Realism* is thoroughly scrutinized. As for consistency, far briefer nightly Dreams evidence consistency. Nevertheless, neither consistency (Dream or *RWOT*) is really that compelling anyway. Consistency marks some Dreams as much as this Waking State dream.

II) *Robustness* of the Mathematics & the validated intricacy of the *Laws of Nature* so far comprehended by Physics reflect a deep complexity & order that surpasses any Thought–theory. True, the robustness & so on – all that is exquisite, & certainly beyond any Thought–structure. But Infinite Consciousness surpasses both Thought & any Universe which is comparatively only a pale ghost-like objective reflection, if that much.

Celebrating the intelligent structure of the Universe by the learned may not allow them to attribute “*intelligent design*” to a primitive conception of a Creator God. But then, what is the basis for this Universe marvel? The impressive Illusion in its *robustness* begs some explanation. However a *Physical Realist* might sort this out or not, the answer lies in *direct experience*. This much was known even to the character Morpheus. By the same token, if Infinite Consciousness were truly Infinite, no *robustness*, illusory or otherwise would be too excessive or more credible.



III) *Agreement in the Testimony* of half a dozen of Billions of people (*like the proverbial 10 billion flies who "can't" be wrong about what they like to eat*) who see, hear, & touch much the same *RWOT*. This is "*witness testimony*" far beyond that in any court of law. This last Proposition is sadly a silly one for any who can take the discussion seriously. Like Johnson's "*stone, kick, & pain*" mentioned in the previous installment, Billions or Trillions cannot "prove" a World that they are supposedly part of.

But *Physicalist Realists* do not take that discussion seriously, having only thoughtless contempt for an alternative to their own view. As if targeting politically incorrect blasphemers, they hurl *ad hominem* "solipsist" insults at anyone skeptical about a single other human being. This is of course a "red herring" because no "solipsist" has ever existed outside of an asylum (*apology for the un-PC crack about "reality-challenged" inmates*). To say that we are all "one" in God or the Absolute Reality. is NOT the same thing as saying "I am an ordinary individual & the rest of you are *zombies*."

In any case, that "*strength in numbers*" argument is the emotional support for the "*seeing is believing, hearing it from everyone*" argument. But if there be no *RWOT*, but only pure Consciousness in "*here*", then there is no embodied Individual Ego self, never mind the Billions of fellow humans who agree with him or her.

The same last point mentioned for Consistency is another view on this Agreement argument, namely that of other characters in a Dream who agree with you, none comes to you, *suspensions* of their *RWOT*. Contemporary Materialists display severe logical flaws just like those who try to "prove" a *RWOT* by "kicking stones". Until Neo is awakened & rescued from the *capsule* he was in, he remains unaware of the imaginary *Matrix VR* World that's been imposed on him. Every aspect of his life was part of this *system*. Feedback from all those around him suggested that this "life" was reality. For this reason, it takes Neo a while to become persuaded & comprehend that his Life, which he thought real until then, was really a Dream.

Neo was really stretched out on a chair, his eyes closed, with wires connecting him to the machine. He was using no physical eyes. He experienced moving, running, & fighting without using any of his muscles or breathing any of that *VR "air"*.

The *Qualia* question, for example, is well illustrated for "*taste*" in *The Matrix* movie. Mouse says to Neo & others around the breakfast table:

"You have to wonder how do the machines really know what Taste Wheat tasted like?

Maybe they got it wrong.

Maybe what I think Taste Wheat tasted like actually tasted like oatmeal or tuna fish.

That makes you wonder. Take chicken, for example.

Maybe they didn't know what to make it taste like which is why it tastes like everything."

Like *The Matrix* there are other such VR films which: *Harsh Realm*, *The Truman Show*, *Abre Los Ojos* & its English version *Open Your Eyes*, & its American cover *Vanilla Sky*, *Memento*, *Brain Dead*, *The Thirteenth Floor*, *Total Recall*, *Strange Days*, *Dark City*, *eXistenZ*, & some movies I would not rate as sufficiently relevant to the topic of Idealistic world-view as demonstrated through futuristic technology. I would however include the first pre-VR Virtual Reality movie *Welcome to Blood City*, & likewise *Lawnmower Man*, *Virtuosity*, & the psychological & chemical technology story of *Jacob's Ladder*. In terms of relevant technology, I would also include the older *Brainstorm*, & more recent *Paycheck*. There are no doubt others. When discussing *The Matrix*, we do well to review VR, Virtual Reality which is a "world" clearly composed of electrical signals in the computer servers, just as our waking World is virtually fabricated by electrical signals in nerve fibers & Brain.

Contemporary *Virtual Reality* systems based on the 5 Senses use special gloves, sounds, odors, to create otherwise ordinary Nerve signals that are interpreted by the Brain. But *Vat* "wiring" is hypothetically possible (*single stimuli have been wired in labs*) & the whole *metaphysical analogy* concerns the reality of the World, not some imagined "equipment".

*The Matrix* movie characters are seated in special armchairs & get their nervous systems directly connected up to a computer, but low-tech or high-tech, the *metaphysical analogy* works the same either way. When Neo expresses his disbelief that that these experiences are only computer generated in the Training Period, the *Simulations* are suddenly frozen (*like in X-Men*). That convince him, but we have less dramatic ways to be convinced, not by argument, but by direct spiritual experience. Like Neo, we too can be forced to concede that what we thought to be real was, in fact, only a VR-like image. Technology has revealed that we can already experience very realistic perceptions without the external World.

Ego, World-Manifestation, Form & Ignorance:  
these are like an *optical illusion*, a *mirage*,  
the *life-history* of a *fictional character*,  
a *Dream* without substance.

Regard all World-Manifestation as an  
*hallucination* or as a Day-Dream  
lasting but a *moment*.

Regard all Thought as an empty echo  
& the World as a Dream.

Know the World to be *unreal*  
& yourself as not a *character* in it,  
the Dream is over.

Nome, Essence of the Teaching (3.67, 3.30, 2.93)

## #48) Looking Back at the Matrix 15:

We continue to use *The Matrix* movie analogies because they are common ground, vividly known & remembered by hundreds of millions around the world who were fascinated by such speculations.

*The Matrix* movie vividly suggest how we can never be sure that the images we perceive are not created by artificial signals (*by machine, God, who / or / whatever*). In other words, we can never distinguish between physical "reality" & Imagination. Everything we perceive is greatly edited & recreated in our Brains anyway. All the information we have about the World we live in is conveyed to us by our 5 senses & these markedly edit the signals they receive, even in *Realist* terms.

Color is subjectively created, & so in "light" in the first place. "Solids" touched, music heard, cooked food smelled, liquids tasted – all mental fabrications from crude signals at most. When we say that we "*see*," in fact we are perceiving the effects of impulses reaching our eyes, after they're transformed into electrical signals in our Brain. That is, when we say that "*we see*", we are actually experiencing electrical signals in our Brain. Everything we see, Touch, Hear, & perceive as matter "the World" & "the Universe" is nothing but electrical signals occurring in our Brain. There are actually no colors, shapes, or sounds inside our Brain. All that can be detected within Brains are electrical signals. No matter how realistic our Perceptions, they are the Mind's interpretations, 3-D images, etc. in the Brain. But that applies to the Nerves & Brain as well, so *what's what* ? Nerves & Brain that fail to verify a World are themselves not verified by Nerves & Brain. Even in mundane terms, the Visual Cortex in the rear of the Brain is *dark*; Hearing areas in the Parietal lobes are *silent*, & so on.

Like the "woman in the red dress" vision that distracts Neo so that he doesn't see Agent Smith coming, we too are distracted by our desires, fears, & assumptions. We seek our *Happiness* in the World & are convinced of our Identity by virtue of that vivid "realness" which actual proves nothing because that vivid intensity is borrowed from, reflected from Consciousness. All that really feels like "myself" is formless, such as Consciousness, Happiness, Love, & Peace. All these are "interior" or actually locationless & not clearly demarcated by Time.

No matter how realistic all the details of one's environment, even the *Realist* must admit that they are experienced only in one's Mind. Even if the originals of these people, places, & events actually exist in some "unnecessary", so-called "outside" World, we can never reach it to prove or disprove that presumed *RWOT* (*real-world-out-there*). Since we can never actually reach the "external world," how can we be sure that such a World really exists? Actually, we cannot. Since each object is only a collection of perceptions, & those perceptions exist only in the Mind. The only World that could exist is the World of Perceptions. The only World we know is the World that exists in the Mind. Any "external

World, a *RWOT*, we cannot be sure of. We can never prove that the Perceptions we experience in the Mind have physical objects that they derive from. Nor is a *Physicalist RWOT* "simpler" or more "plausible"; it is simply a more familiar assumption.

Knowing the **Self** is being the **Self**,  
& **Being** means **Existence**, one's own **Existence**.  
No one denies one's **Existence**  
any more than one denies one's eyes,  
although one cannot see them.  
The trouble lies with your desire to objectify the **Self**,  
in the same way as you objectify your eyes  
when you place a **mirror** before them.  
You have been so accustomed to objectivity  
that you have lost the knowledge of yourself,  
simply because the **Self** cannot be objectified.  
Who is to know the **Self** ? Can the insentient **Body** know it?  
All the time you speak & think of your "**I**",  
yet when questioned you deny knowledge of it.  
You are the **Self**, yet you ask how to know the **Self**.

selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi

### #49) Looking Back at the Matrix 16:

David Hume's *Metaphysical Problem of Causation* is illustrated in *nightly Dreams*. *Dream Cause* never "produces" the *Dream Effect*. In *Dream* & in an *Idealist Waking World*, a mere image cannot cause another image, whether in *Waking* or in *Dream*.

When we awaken from a *Dream*, right away we realize what we experienced was a *Dream*. But we don't similarly question what we call "*real life*," beginning with the "*waking-up*." Even though we perceive what we call "*real life*" in the same way that we do in *Dreams*, we take this next *real* for granted. Both *Worlds* are images in the *Mind*, including a central character, others & objects, illumination from a *Sun* or artificial light, pleasure & pain, & so on. Until we are awakened from a *Dream*, we are not aware that it is a *Dream*. As *Morpheus* asked *Neo*, *how can we be certain that what we are seeing now is not a Dream ?*

We have no evidence to the contrary. In *Dream*, we hold objects in our hands & see with our eyes, but there are really no hands or eyes, nor anything to hold on to. What separates "*real life*" from the *Dream World*? "*Life*" in both realms is lived in the *Mind*.

Back in *The Matrix*, when we first see *Neo* he is awakening from a "*Dream*" within the *Matrix*. The bootlegged software "customers" who come to his door are asked by *Neo* about his *dream-within-dream* confusion.

*"Ever have that feeling where you're not sure if you're awake or dreaming ?"*

When *Neo* is far later sitting by the antique mirror, in which his face was captured in multiples of cracked glass, he touches that mirror & begins to enter a *World* or dimension within or behind the mirror. Pulling away, the "*quicksilver liquid*" follows & engulfs him,

just like that in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century film, Cocteau's *Orpheus*. The entry idea comes of course from *Alice Through the Looking Glass*. Morpheus even refers to that adventure of seeking in Lewis Carroll's terms of going "down the rabbit hole." The mirror's "quicksilver" (liquid mercury) seems to engulf Neo due to the red-pill hallucination. The pill was preparing Neo for extraction of his body from the Vat & his Mind from *The Matrix*. But nobody else sees the silvery liquid metal engulfing Neo's hand, arm, neck, face, & so on, for that was only Neo's pill-induced hallucination.

*Idealism* does not rule out individual, private Dream within the World-dream. When the fluid silver seems to turn him inside out & he "falls down the chute" to awaken in the Vat. The electronic "honking" that briefly sounds was a good capturing a traditional subtle sound heard when traversing altered state of consciousness.

The many objective differences are not real but are mere superimpositions on Self, which is of nature of True Knowledge. If the idea "I am the Body" is accepted, selves are multiple. The state in which this "I am the Body" idea vanishes is the Self since in that state there are no other objects. Since the Body itself does not exist in the natural outlook of the real Self, but only in the extroverted outlook of the Mind which is deluded by the power of Illusion, to call Self, the Space of Consciousness, dehi [the possessor of the Body, lit.: cremation fuel] is wrong. The World does not exist without the Body, the Body never exists without the Mind, the Mind never exists without Consciousness, & Consciousness never exists without Reality. For the wise one who has known Self by divining within himself, there is nothing other than Self to be known. Since the Ego which identifies the Body as "I" has perished, the wise one is the formless Existence-Consciousness. The jnani knows he is the Self & that nothing, neither his Body nor anything else, exists but the Self. What difference could presence/absence of a Body make?

selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi

## #50) Quantum duality:

We can "shoot the breeze" for a bit, something that is often a useless enterprise. & so it would be this time, if it were only the "breeze" that would be the objective. But here we seek instead to scrutinize the source of the "breeze" & the nature of the one who entertains that "breeze." So issues like the scientific rigor & so on, fall far secondary to the inspiration that may still be sparked, by even the sloppiest reasoning.

Warming up to the main topic we can take for example another "Quantum" riddle, the discrete spectrum of *Quanta* versus the Space-Time *Continuum* of General Relativity. Seeing Reality as Non-Dual Consciousness would if anything favor that 2<sup>nd</sup> objective reflection, that of the Space-Time *Continuum*. Non-Dual Consciousness is seamless & formless so that the *Continuum* would seem the more apt objective reflection or analog

for subjective Consciousness. But Quantum Mechanics through String Theory present us with *quantized* tiny pieces, points in Space-Time, like dots on a line, sheet, of volume.

Historically, *Vedanta* opposed the Hindu *Vaisisheka* Philosophical school that chopped up Reality into material "atoms", each called *para-manu*, or ultimate *manu*. We'll get back to that after noting that Leucippus & Democritus translated that more ancient *Vaisisheka* Philosophical invention as the ultimate "unchoppable" of "a-tomic" unit, where the Greek "tome" is seen in the "micro-tome" instrument & "tom-ography" where "tome" means "slice". The *Eleatic* Philosophers like Parmenides, Zeno, & Melissus denied the possibility of such "atoms" or the "quanta" that later played the same role. Whether it be the *void space* inside a Nucleon, between Quarks, or within an Atom, or between Atoms or Galaxies, that *void space* would consist of Nothing, & Nothing is that which does not exist. [*Einstein reached a similar conclusion when he traded in Newton's Absolute Void Space for the systems of distances found in Special Relativity. In General Relativity, Space-Time became the substance of Matter-Energy itself.*]

That *Eleatic* objection was similarly seen in what in Latin became the principle of *ex nihilo nihil fit* – from Nothing, no thing is made – this the later repudiation of the Church's *creatio ex nihilo* or "creation out of nothing" doctrine (*still identically found as the basis for Big Bang & Multi-verse Cosmologies*).

In any case, back to the *Vaisisheka* concept of *manu* we see it as one of a large family of cognate words in European & in fact in Indo-European languages. That which divides Time in the Moon, seen in *month*, *menses*, *measure*, *meter*, & even *mind* & *mental*. The Mind is that which divides & measures into Duality & Multiplicity, from a *continuum* of Consciousness, to the discrete World spectrum of *manus*, atoms, *quanta*, strings, etc.

Thus the age-old Discrete-Continuum duality, one similar to numerous related dualities like digital-analog, etc., lightly entertaining such speculation can inspire *reflective* contemplation back into the nature of Mind, of Self, of Consciousness.

With that warm-up we tackle the Duality-of-the-day, with even far less scientific rigor, but remember, with the objective of inspiring inward contemplation if possible.

Quantum Mechanics couples characteristic pairs of variables by *commutator* brackets & the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle. Similar pairing characterizes Fourier & inverse-Fourier transforms. Sparing the for the unfamiliar reader, the scary-looking (*when unfamiliar*) notation, we might "shoot the breeze" as follows.

Many homework problems, in a dozen of more fields of Physics, are virtually intractable in Space-Time coordinates but "fall out" easily in Frequency-Phase space coordinates. A related duality is seen when Momentum-Space variables (*subject to the Uncertainty Principle*) are traded for Energy-Time variables (*also subject to the Uncertainty Principle*) by Fourier & inverse-Fourier transforms. To really "shoot the breeze" we can try to dodge the Math for the unfamiliar & verbally hint at it like this.



Firstly, in Uncertainty Principle terms, the more closely we pin down the Momentum of a quantum particle, the less precisely we can know its position in Space. The product of the 2 *uncertainties* must exceed  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a "reduced" (by  $2\pi$ ) Planck's constant unit of Action. This is true for *commuting* couples Momentum-Space & Energy-Time.

In Fourier transform terms, a Wavefunction isolated to a function of Space can be composed of Momentum waves, with a Wavefunction isolated to a function of Time can be composed of Frequency waves. In another sense, computed probability (*squared absolute value of probability amplitude*) consists of the space-wavefunction-weighted sum of plane waves [OR] the frequency-wavefunction-weighted sum of plane waves.

Whatever that Physics & Math, means, we can come away today with this one insight. The Mind splits subjective Non-Dual Consciousness into objective Dualities like Momentum-Space & Energy-Time, & differently, Dualities like discrete-continuum, wave-particle, Space-Time & Matter-Energy. The seamless inter-convertibility of many of these *within & between* the Dualities suggest some deep unity for the Dualities. That *unification* is the singular perspective of imagined Individual Mind itself.

Ego is part & parcel of every Idea & all Ideas are unified at the Ego. Something is Good/Bad, Near/Far, Big/Small, etc *for me*. Every viewpoint is *for me*. Ego is part of every Idea & every Idea is referenced to the Ego, like the Origin of a Coordinate system that marks & unifies every Coordinate vector. We see in terms Space or Time, or Frequency, in terms of Discrete or Continuum, & so we "see" the same mental creation equivalently, regardless of our choice of conjugate variables. Consciousness is reflected in the structure of Mind that seems to perform these feats of Quantum duality.

Even the thought "I do not realize" is a hindrance.  
In fact, the **Self** alone is. Our real nature is *mukti*.  
But we are imagining we are bound & are making  
various, strenuous attempts to become free,  
while we are all the while free.  
This will be understood only  
when we reach that stage.  
We will be surprised that we were frantically  
trying to attain something  
which we have always been and are.  
A man goes to sleep in this hall.  
He dreams he has gone on a world tour,  
is roaming over hill and dale,  
forest and country, desert & sea,  
across various continents &  
after many years of weary & strenuous travel,  
returns to this country, reaches & walks in.  
Just at that moment he wakes up &  
finds he has not moved an inch  
but was sleeping where he lay down.  
He has not returned after great effort to this hall,  
but is and always has been in the hall.  
It is exactly like that. If it is asked,  
"Why being free do we imagine that we are bound?"  
"Why being in the hall did you imagine  
you were on a **World** adventure,  
crossing hill & dale, desert and sea?"  
It is all **Mind** or **maya** [illusion].

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

## #51) a Story about "J":

Besides being my own name, I find the letter "J" interesting in that Western Romance languages (based on Roman Latin) had no "J" in the old days, it being not yet distinguished from "i" which was also akin to "y" especially when used as a soft-consonant or semi-vowel. We get back to that part of the story in a moment, but first we note a harder "j" that was a voiced "g" such as appears in our words *ignore*, *ignorant*, & the older Greek word we use *gnosis* for *knowledge*. In fact the "kn" is the same "gn" for the more Germanic languages. Putting a vowel between the 2 consonant & the nasal "glide" or "n" we see in English "with our ken" with "ken" being better known as in Scottish Gaelic as "to know." The German "kinnen" & other examples could be offered. From the PIE (*Proto-Indo-European*) root *gno*, other are derived words are: *recognize*, *agnostic*, *diagnosis*, *can*, *cunning*, *uncouth*, *notice*, *notable*, & *narrate*.

But instead of hardening the Greek-Latin "gn" of "gnosis" we can soften it to the other voiced "j" as in the Sanskrit *jnana*, meaning Knowledge of Reality. The more common English word "ignorance" is then *ajnana*, similar to but not exactly the same as the more "complete" concept of "not seeing", *avidya* or deep ignorance.

Now back to the West, note the abbreviation of names, before first & last became a common pattern, was to take the first 3 letters of a single name. So the abbreviation for Jesus was "jes", but before the "j" that was "ies". Furthermore, the "e" was the long Greek *eta* η (used in Physics for *viscosity*) whose capital was H, or what is now our capital "h". So scrolls atop a crucifix often have the 3-letter abbreviation "jes" or then "ies", of course in Capitals, because Greek script used to be only Capitals. Thus the ιης read I H Σ. In more recent centuries, when 3-letter abbreviated names were less in fashion, that 3-letter scroll was viewed by the masses as 3 initials for the full name of Jesus. Not knowing Greek letters anyway, the masses overlooked the first & last letter, assuming they were fitting, but they did recognize the "middle initial" – the "h" of course. Hence with less disrespect than it sounds like now, the common man might be heard to swear "Jesus H. Christ!" – simply believing capital long "e" was actually his "middle initial" – the "h".

See if the unreal has come to be.  
There is no such thing as the unreal,  
from another standpoint. The Self alone exists.  
When you try to trace the Ego,  
which is the basis of the perception of the World &  
everything else, you find the Ego does not exist at all &  
neither does all this creation that you see.

## #52) Happiness:

Philosophers struggle to define Happiness in terms of "well-being", "positive feeling tone", achievement of one's "well informed" (*relatively wise*) desires, & so on.

The Oracle in *The Matrix* did a better job if we could borrow here hint about "being the One." She said it's like falling in Love. No one has to tell you (*no one could tell you, no deny your claim*). You just know it (*directly*) "through & through".

In the context of Non-Duality, the Sages tell us that Happiness is our Real Nature, as one sense of *Ananda* in *Sat – Chit – Ananda*, Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. For the same reason that we seek Self-Knowledge, seek to know our own Identity, we likewise seek Happiness, which is our Identity. Cessation of Existence is inconceivable, so that those who identify with a Body will fear Death. Either way, such cessation of Existence is unacceptable because we intuit that this would bring an end to Happiness.

Self-Knowledge & thus true & lasting Happiness are gained by the removal of Ignorance as to our own Identity. So to inquire: *Who am I ?* & to subjectively find the inquirer to be the answer, to be that pure Existence & Happiness - this alone is the final & lasting solution to our unending search for Happiness.

When I breathe, turn left or right, think this thought or another, all is done to increase Happiness or to decrease the loss of Happiness, for this is the only motive. Complete Self-Knowledge includes the recognition that as Happiness itself, we can never find it outside, & once realized, we can never lose it.

In the meantime, the very mean, mean, meantime, we chase external objects of desire in a dream-world. When apparently attained for the moment, that anxiety of the Mind relaxes, & a glimmer of true Happiness is experienced. But as the Buddha advised, in telling us that the nature of worldly life is suffering:

1) to not get what you want is suffering

2) to get what you don't want is suffering

3) to get what you want also includes suffering because we sense that what appears in Time, with a beginning, will certainly have an end & be lost.

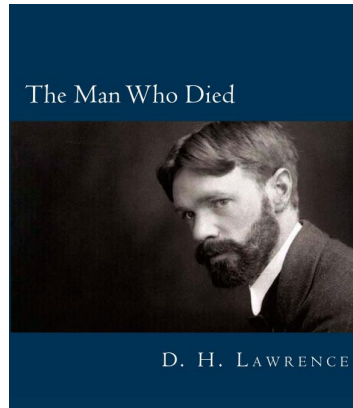
4) whatever the happiness enjoyed when you get what you want, you still sense that you could have more or better, may have once had more or better, & that "others" already have more or better.

Real Happiness never ends & has never left us, even if only dimly appearing as the "reference background" by which we "measure" lesser happiness. We always know just

how happy we are, or are not. We often know the same about others. Ever we "measure" against that "reference background" which is our own True Nature, the unwavering Reality of Happiness which is our very Existence.

The *ajnani* sees only the Mind which is a mere reflection of the light of pure Consciousness, because his Mind is extroverted & has never sought its source.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*



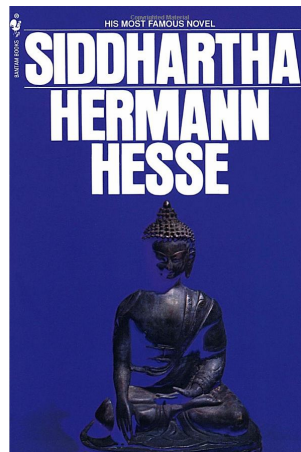
### #53) Humanizing the Great Sage:

After briefly mentioning a *novella* that takes liberties as an alternative fictional "biography" of Jesus, our focus bears upon an only slightly comparable treatment of the Buddha, sort of.

First for that comparison point, the *racy* Victorian, D.H. Lawrence, author of the infamous *Lady Chatterley* novel & *Women in Love*, we have his *novella* entitled *The Man Who Died*. [ *The latter titled was never agreed to by the author who finally accepted ut uf the subtitle was his own title "The Lost Cock" (supposedly as in Rooster) as the sub-title. But that printing was scraped & his title never appeared on a published book.* ] The story picks up where the *not-really-dead* Jesus "escapes" the sepulcher & head North up the Eastern Mediterranean coast, fleeing all his bad luck in Jerusalem. Suffice it to say that this very "human" version of Jesus may well have done much to inspire Scorsese's Jesus story starring Willem Defoe & Harvey Keitel (*in case you ever wondered where that idea came from*). Lawrence has him "fulfill" his "human" life by romance with a Vestal Virgin of *Isis*.

Now such a novelist (& a movie director) does not have "all wrong" in presuming that the closest many come to divine bliss is found for them in fleeting, youthful experiences of sexual love. In many ways that theme has it all over any competing *esprit de corps* lauded in an war movie of action hero "buddy movie" drama. Films that depict the next highest stage of "*worldly bliss*" the joy of parenthood, more often divert to situation

comedy. But none of these comes anywhere close to real spiritual bliss & true happiness. Be that as it may, the Western novelist may typically imply that no man is a real man, not even an enlightened Sage man, without a "love interest". Such is not unknown in the life of a Sage, especially when Platonic couples are included, but that beautiful part of life is not actually *the* Meaning of Life. In any case, a similar "*humanizing*" *novella* focuses on the Buddha, namely *Siddhartha* by Hermann Hesse.

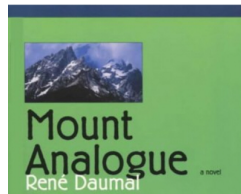


Now of course, Hesse diverts from casting Gautama Sakhyamuni himself as the romantic protagonist. That Kshatriya caste prince renounced queen & palace to initially embark on great austerity. Confronted with the suffering in life that his royal upbringing had hidden from him, the young Buddha later transcends his initially super-ascetic "Samana" path with its overtones of Jainism & Gymnosophists. The later Japanese Zen Buddhist Bankei took a similar swing to the "extreme" before duplicating the Buddha's Enlightenment, perhaps more purely than any other in that land.

But Hesse's *novella* respectfully keeps "hands off" the Buddha himself, who appears as himself, as one important guide in the development of the *novella's* actual protagonist *Siddhartha* who symbolically stands in as a surrogate Gautama since he shares the Buddha's same first name, *Siddhartha*. This allows Hesse to run a somewhat Lawrence-like *revision* of the Buddha's story, while technically leaving the Buddha untouched. *Siddhartha* has associates with similarly symbolic names of *Govinda* (Krishna) & later *Vasudeva* (Vishnu). But *Siddhartha* is an affluent son of a *Brahmin* caste family who somewhat similarly turns away to become a super-extreme ascetic "Samana" & later leave that for a more enlightened further journey.

But in that further journey he does the Lawrence-thing & becomes a "real man" of mythic sexual experience, only this time, she ain't no virgin. Altogether though, some spiritual themes do decorate the *novella* as with many Hesse stories, including his other "eastern" theme, *Journey to the East*, a *Mt Analog*— like (*Rene Daumal*) adventure story. But QND,

Qualified Non-Duality is as high as it gets, with much that is QD, Qualified Duality as well, culminating in much that is *Naturalism & Pantheism*.



Hesse repeatedly mixes up meditation upon the Absolute Self with heroic "individualism" which is of course only adventure-story Egoism. His character confesses to submersion in *Samsara*, bewildered by *Maya* but never fully extricates himself from that "individualism".

Meanwhile, *Siddhartha* makes some nice references to Self-Inquiry, especially in the beginning when reviewing his *Brahmanic* roots. One example is a poetic image for Self-Inquiry he claims as *Vedic*.

*Om is the bow, the arrow is the soul,*

*Brahman is the arrow's goal*

*at which one aims unflinchingly.*

"He had known for a long time that his Self was Atman, of the same eternal nature as Brahman, but he had never really found his Self, because he wanted to trap it in the net of thoughts. The body was certainly not the Self, nor the play of the senses, nor thought, nor understanding, nor acquired wisdom or art with which to draw conclusions & from already existing thoughts to spin new thoughts. No, this world of thought was still on this side, & it led to no goal when one destroyed the senses of the incidental Self but fed it with thoughts & erudition. Both thought & senses were fine things, ... neither to despise them nor overrate either of them ..."

"Was it not his Self, his small, fearful & proud Self, with which he has wrestled for so many years, but which always conquered him again & again, which appeared each time again & again, which robbed him of happiness & filled him with fear ? "

While distinguishing the 2 opposing senses of "Self" he does unusually capitalize both the that confusion runs deeper when running with the "individualism" theme. But all n all, *Siddhartha*, with all its errors & mistakes is quite a bit more inspiring than Lawrence, Scorsese, & Willem Defoe [as in *The Last Temptation of Christ* film with a similarly humanized & sexual Jesus. Depicted marriage to Magdalene is Da Vinci Code standard with non-canonical Gospel support. But including Martha & Mary in a Harem was another giant step].



Just as a small pot of water reflects the enormous Sun within the narrow limits of the pot, even so the *vasanas* or latent tendencies of the *Mind* of the individual, acting as the reflecting medium, catch the all-pervading, infinite light of *Consciousness*. The form of this reflection is the phenomenon called the Mind. Seeing only this reflection, the *ajnani* is deluded into the belief that he is a finite being, the *jiva*, the individual self.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

### #54) Ego Caterpillar:

[Prior to looking at the Caterpillar Analogy, etc. – there follows a quick follow-up on the last "if you see a World" comments with Quintessence of Vedanta. This also applies to any controversy as to the intent of Parmenides – Non-Duality or Qualified Non-Duality.

A Chinese poem is reworded in the Donovan song as: "first there is a mountain, then there is no mountain, then there is." [*Another good Donovan line was "I love everything in this God-Almighty World, God knows I do !"*]

I love everything in this  
God-Almighty World,  
God knows I do !

Sri Shankara is often quoted (*especially by the "both" crowd, but also by absolute especially by the "both" crowd, but also by absolute non-dualists like Ramana Maharshi*) with the 7<sup>th</sup> century Sage saying: "*Brahman is Real, the World is unreal, the World is Brahman.*" In terms of spiritual practice, traditional commentary notes that establish the Absolute Reality as the Truth, the teacher declares the World to be unreal "if only" allow a complete make-over of the aspirants world-view.

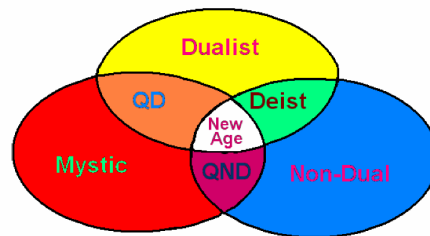
For some (*destined to be in the "both" crowd*) that 2<sup>nd</sup> World-disavowal "then there is no mountain" allows them to drop previous concepts & perhaps later to rebuild a more enlightened world-view from scratch – "then there is" or "the World is Brahman."

For others, that "rebuild" is not needed & they are inclined to stay in the *Ajatavada* "no-creation" mode of no-World. It "works" either way. Maharshi (& *actually Shankara for*



*that matter*) was strictly *Ajativada* "no-creation" no-World but the majority of his enlightened disciples may well have been in the "both" crowd. My guru, a Maharshi disciple, is *Ajativada* "no-creation" no-World, but his enlightened wife is in the "both" crowd. She is not a drop less enlightened than her husband, but as for the *Ajativada* "no-creation" no-World, she just does not resonate with that mode. An attempted explanation by example follows.

The "basic steps" on the path of Self-Inquiry is realization of no-World, no-Body, no-Mind, no-Ego; but the minimum "essential" sequence is "*I am not attached or bound by the World*", "*I am not the Body*", "*I am not the Mind*", "*I am not an Ego*." For the *Ajativada* "no-creation" no-World group, a fast-track can be to realize the non-existence of each as in no-World, no-Body, no-Mind, no-Ego; but freedom from Ego *is* Enlightenment, just as much, whichever path taken. To stumble over the no-World issue is a counter-productive waste of precious time. It is enough to be free of the World, & then the Body, & then the Mind. To think that any other route is "better" would only be "Ego" which contradicts either approach, so who cares? Thus Sri Shankara would say that if you "see" a World, fine, so long as you find no objective lure there & remain unattached. If you "see" a World, then further know that it could only be Brahman as well (*like the Self*) & hence Sri Shankara's "*the World is Brahman*" (*if there is one*). [When "expedient" Qualified Non-Duality QND teaching compares Reality to an unreal appearance, the intended emphasis is merger with the Reality rather than clutching to the unreal.]

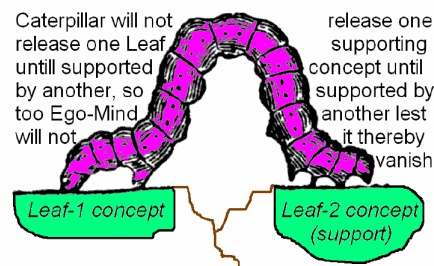


Again, to even imagine for a moment that one way is "higher" of "more real" than the other (*looking in either direction*) is only Ego. Best to forget the comparison at that point, follow one's true inclination, & get on with it. One of the truer epigrams in *The Lazy Man's Guide to Enlightenment* (not 100% trustworthy) was: "*Enlightenment doesn't care how you get there.*"

As for Parmenides, he still reads no-World to me, but what do I know. Admittedly, without *Ajativada*, *Madhyamika*, *Yogacharya*, or *southern Chinese Ch'an* gurus around to draw from, taking the "both" perspective would be the more likely for the Eleatic Philosophers, & every bit just as good. "



One of Ramana Maharshi's helpful analogies compared the Ego (*or Mind, actually synonymous*) to a Caterpillar poised on one leaf, leaning over to contact another leaf, & gathering itself entirely onto the 2<sup>nd</sup> leaf. This travel, from leaf to leaf, without ever losing contact with at least one of them, Sri Ramana compared to the dependence of Ego upon the supporting Concepts (which themselves were originally founded on the same Ego). Major Concept examples in this scenario would include identification with a Body, Thoughts, Individual Identity with its personality, gender, relationship, position in Time & in the World, & so on. Seeking Happiness externally, chasing Pleasure & avoiding Pain, seeking to acquire & prevent loss, – all such conceptual structures play greater or lesser supporting roles in maintaining the illusory, apparent reality of the Ego.



Within the Caterpillar Analogy, one of the key images is the outcome when the Caterpillar–Ego is "caught" between leaves (major supporting concepts) & "falls" to its extinction without such support – because Duality in the "bootstrapping" *Dependent Origination* of this sort inevitably requires "2" & cannot continue as "1".

Another Analogy that Sri Ramana used to symbolize Self-Inquiry (*investigation*) could be given a secondary interpretation similar to the above. This would be no coincidence because Self-Inquiry (*investigation*) "unveils" & thus destroys "bootstrapping" *Dependent Origination*, causing the "Caterpillar to drop" (*if the mixed metaphor could be allowed*). This other Analogy concerns the spurious Wedding Guest.

"Crashing" a large family wedding, that included days of feasting, an intruding imposter "made nice" with the Bride's family who assumed he must be well know to the Groom. Seeing that warms reception from a little distance, the bulk of the Groom's family took this welcome to imply that the Intruder was, in turn, well known to the Bride's family. & so the "wedding–crasher's" *status* had, like that of the Ego, been falsely "bootstrapped" with support from one side dependent on misinterpretation of support from the other side, & vice versa. Only when the suspicious Groom "inquired" (*investigated*) the Intruder's identity did the same Intruder "make himself scarce" lest the truth come out. So will the

Ego flee the scrutiny of Self-Inquiry. So will the "bootstrapping" *Dependent Origination* of the Ego's spurious *status* be foiled.

Yet one more Analogy focuses on the mutual inter-dependence linking the Ego & its self-created supporting Concepts & Mis-identifications. Here the more dry, abstract Analogy of Cartesian Coordinate Space can be brought into play. [In the lengthy free e-book, TOE volume 1, *this Coordinate Space analogy is variously & exhaustively illustrated as a viewpoint on Ego, Thought, Mind, Time, Space, & the World.*]

Ego is the (0, 0) reference Origin for a "graph" of the Mind with Ego at the center, & other thoughts & concepts as Coordinate Points in the "space" of Mind. Every thought lacks meaning & definition with the reference Origin that "anchors" & gives meaning to all the Coordinate values. Without the Ego reference Origin no thought (*coordinate point*) has any even-imaginary existence at all. But the *Dependent Origination* goes the other way as well. Without the space of Coordinate Points, the naked Ego is a 0-dimensional Point with neither length, area, nor volume – essentially Nothing at all.

The positive Reality is the Self-Existence that each one knows, & none could ever doubt. Under the spell of Ego-illusion, such may seem to be *existence-with-individuality*. But with Self-Knowledge, that same alternative is unequivocally known to be impossible, to be non-existent. The only, the same Self-Existence already known is recognized in its true Nature to be *Existence-without-individuality*.

Go deep into the sense of 'I am'  
and you will find.  
How do you find a thing you have mislaid or forgotten?  
You keep it in your mind until you recall it.  
The sense of being, of 'I am' is the first to emerge.  
Ask yourself whence it comes,  
or just watch it quietly.  
When the mind stays in the 'I am', without moving,  
you enter a state that cannot be verbalized  
but can be experienced.  
All you need to do is to try and try again."

*selection from Nisargadatta's I Am That*

### #55) Radical Skepticism:

BIV *brain-in-a-vat* Radical Skepticism:

- 1) I don't know that I'm not a brain-in-a-vat.
- 2) If I don't know that I'm not a brain-in-a-vat, then I don't know very much.
- 3) So, I don't know very much.

*We are in fact, Brain in a Vat. Our brain sits in cerebrospinal fluid. It is connected via brain stem for all sensory input just as if in a jar. All input to our cortex is created via gated response of calcium ion, acetylcholine & sodium ion chemicals coded as response.*

*We have little or no knowledge in the pure, 100% certain, sense. The vast majority of our knowledge has provisos because our experience is fallible. Did I really see, hear, or read that? How much can I trust this information or anything I infer from it? How accurate is my internal model of how the world works?*

*"It is a rational presupposition of ours that everything has a natural & perceptible cause. We are convinced of this. Causality, so understood, is one of our ( Western, scientific) most sacred dogmas. There is no legitimate place in our world for invisible, arbitrary, & so called super-natural forces - unless, indeed, we follow the modern physicist in his scrutiny of the minute & secret world of the atom, wherein, as it appears, curious things come to pass. But that is far from the beaten track. We distinctly resent the idea of invisible & arbitrary forces, for it is not so long ago that we made our escape from that frightening world of dreams & superstitions & constructed for ourselves a cosmos worthy of rational consciousness - that latest & greatest achievement of man. We are now surrounded by a world that is obedient to rational laws."    Carl Jung*

*As a kid I wondered if what I saw as the color blue actually looked blue to others. Of course it's blue, he looked at the sky & called it blue, it must be blue. But maybe he's always called what is in my world, red, blue.*

Radical Skepticism in 3 contexts:

*Radical Skepticism is inevitable unless one adheres to one or another Dualism.*

Reality may not be up for a vote, & the word "prefer" may not apply to whatever a Philosophical position points to, unless that's all relative & personal.

BIV denials mistake the Finger for the Moon that it points to. Notable adherents to what follows include Shankara & Ramana Maharshi. & in their confidential heart of hearts, I believe the same for Rene Descartes, George Berkeley, & even David Hume (not to mention contemporary internet personalities like Turkey's publisher Harun Yahya).

First of the Contexts, (1) *Philosophical Non-Duality*; & then (2) *Physicalist Realism Non-Duality*; & finally: (3) *Spiritual Non-Duality*.

(1) *Philosophical Non-Duality* itself is either *Materialist Non-Duality* (*what matters is Matter, never Mind*); or *Idealist Non-Duality* (*Mind you, no Matter, no matter what*).

a) Materialist Non-Duality admits of Mind as only a *relationship* amid Matter, an accidental Evolution, an *emergent* Epi-phenomenon of Neurological hierarchies,

increasingly self-referencing. There can seem to be Knowledge, but without a *knower* other than Objective Matter, any Subjectivity is an illusion – hence Radical Skepticism.

*[One of the first (still available) Hologram demos to appear in Exploratorium museum displays depicted a small magnifying glass, clamped (holographically) over a small watch on a chain, an antique vest-pocket time-piece. Spectators viewing through the "magnifying glass" from different angles would see various portions of the "watch" magnified, to include various numbers on the watch-face, slanted according to the angle of viewing. The "magnifying glass" seemed to be a functioning instrument of Perception, & seemed to deliver facilitate varying "knowledge" of the watch. But all seen by the spectator was recorded & projected from the Holographic film. There was no physical magnifying glass that could do any magnifying.]*

b) Idealist Non-Duality admits of Mind only, & "Matter" is just the *knowing* apparently about Matter. In the this sense of Radical Skepticism, there is no Matter to be known, so Knowledge of Matter is erroneous, only *knower(s)* can be known truly since Matter does not exist. This Idealist Radical Skeptic would point out that *knower(s)* contacts Knowledge only & never "touches" any Matter. Equivocating, Descartes & Berkeley, if only to escape dangerous Church censure, added unknowable Matter posited by God anyway, just in case we needed it, & publicly rescinded the Radical Skepticism they had so carefully articulated.

(2) *Physicalist Realist* Non-Duality itself has 2 versions, the first being Physicalist–Materialist Non-Duality (*String-Brane Space-Time universe(s) of Matter-Energy*). Mind (being again like the & its Knowledge is described & dismissed (no *knower*) just as for Philosophical Materialism. Physicalist Realism is simply the new & improved Philosophical Materialism.

*Physicalist Realism* has a more recent alternative: Computational-Information universe(s) that may or may not be Bostrum-Simulation(s), but seem to be "required" for no-loss of Information in a Black Hole "boiling off" by Hawking radiation. In the latter focus, the (+ / –), (North-South magnetic) etc, Binary "machine code" that is the universe(s) manifests as one-less-dimension Holograms at the Event-Horizon of a Black Hole, & perhaps at boundary of the Space-Time universe(s), Brane-manifolds, or whatever. In any case we are back to a new & improved *Philosophical* Non-Duality once again, this time non-Materialist, but instead Entropy-Information in essence. But Radical Skepticism again results, though not strictly Idealist, even though non-Materialist. Information is just as Objective & as "dead" as Matter is, as regards any *knower(s)* – being just a less tangible Materialism.

(3) *Spiritual* Non-Duality has only 1 version, but watered-down half-steps can be enumerated as pseudo-alternatives. Inherently beyond verbal expression, *Spiritual* Non-

Duality can be hinted at as follows, & can be metaphorically said to include Radical Skepticism.

Yes, in the sense of the *Idealist*, Matter could be said to be only the *knowing* (perceiving) of Matter, without any Matter to be actually known. The vast orderly complexity of Cosmology, Physics, Biology, etc. is again just a *homunculus* (a "red-herring" of distracting but irrelevant detail, like the Holographic Magnifying glass) & *proves* nothing, however fascinating & impressive.

But one step deeper, Thoughts themselves are only inert *homunculi* in Consciousness, evanescent appearances with neither substance nor essential Being. Just as the Matter-World *known* as Thoughts, so too, the Thoughts are dismissible as regards actual Knowledge, there being only self-knowing Consciousness, the Supreme Being. We & our World are like dream characters & dream objects, never separate from or other than that Supreme Being. From that directly experience-able Reality, *Radical Skepticism* regarding "knowledge" of Matter or Mind (*inert again like the Holographic Magnifying glass*) is clear enough.

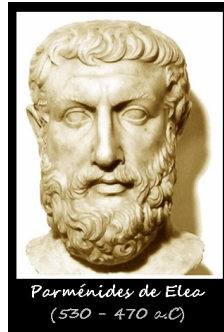
My eyes damp with the nectar of the Lord,  
 & my soul it is filled with his Love.  
 He tested my heart with his touchstone  
 & found it to be pure.  
 Through the Guru,  
 I am dyed a deep crimson.  
 This body & mind are wet  
 with the Love of my Lord.  
 Nanak the slave,  
 has been drenched in his fragrance,  
 & this life of mine has been blessed.  
 The Lord's Love is like a piercing arrow,  
 it has struck deep into my heart.  
 He who has known Love's pain,  
 knows how to withstand it.  
 The one who dies,  
 to this "life" I add to Life,  
 has achieved Liberation  
 in his lifetime.  
 Oh God make this slave,  
 to meet with the true Guru,  
 so he can cross the difficult Ocean,  
 the difficult Ocean of the World.

"Guru Nanak"

## #56) Parmenides & Melissus :

Conspicuously missing from the above duo is the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the 3 famous Eleatic Philosophers, namely Zeno. His own mathematically oriented "paradoxes" will find their

way into our discussion at a later date. Suffice it to say for now, that phrases like *The Quantum Zeno Effect* hint at his more serious status among various Quantum Gravity Physicists & some philosophers. This remains true after 2½ millennia despite summary put-downs of "easy Zeno targets" by Middle School math teachers everywhere. I wonder who has the deeper view, physicists & philosophers, or the middle school math teachers?



Meanwhile, following in the footsteps of his guru, Parmenides, the Admiral, Melissus of Samos, was the naval fleet commander who twice defeated the Athenian hero-general Pericles (*for who is named that city-states pre-democracy "golden age of Pericles"*). Not as "academic" as the other 2 Eleatic sages, Melissus repeated his master's arguments in simple declarative propositions, as repeated here, with redundant duplication included where they fit the "flow" of the arguments.

- 1) Whatever comes to be must have a beginning.
- 2) The One did not come to be.
- 3) Therefore, The One does not have a beginning.
- 4) Therefore, The One is eternal (has always existed in the past).
- 5) Whatever has a beginning must also end.
- 6) The One did not have a beginning.
- 7) Therefore, The One will not end.
- 8) Therefore, The One is eternal (will always exist in the future).
- 9) Whatever has a beginning & end is neither eternal nor unlimited.
- 10) Being has no beginning or end.
- 11) Therefore, it is eternal & unlimited.
- 12) What-is is temporally unlimited.
- 13) Therefore, nothing else spatially unlimited could exist at a different time.
- 14) What-is is spatially unlimited.
- 15) Therefore, nothing else temporally unlimited could exist at the same time.
- 16) Therefore, what-is is one.
- 17) If what-is has qualitative differences, it is plural.
- 18) What-is is one.
- 19) What-is is whole in & of itself.
- 20) Therefore, what-is has no qualitative differences, it is seamlessly all the same.
- 21) Whatever undergoes change is altered.
- 22) Whatever is altered is not unified or whole.
- 23) The One is unified & whole.



- 24) Therefore, The One does not undergo any type of change.
- 25) To be empty is to be nothing.
- 26) What is nothing does not exist.
- 27) The One exists.
- 28) Therefore, The One is not empty.
- 29) What is not empty must be full.
- 30) Therefore, The One is full.
- 31) Whatever has motion is not full.
- 32) Whatever is full has no empty spaces need for motion.
- 33) The One is full.
- 34) Therefore, The One is motionless.
- 35) The One is whole in & of itself.
- 36) Therefore, The One has no parts.
- 37) Therefore, The One has no "thickness".
- 38) Therefore, The One does not have a material form.

**We are slaves to what we do not know.  
 Whatever in ourselves we discover &  
 understand its causes & its workings,  
 we overcome it by the very knowing;  
 the unconscious dissolves when  
 brought into the conscious.**

*selection from Nisargadatta's I Am That*

### #57) Parmenides himself:

The teachings of Parmenides himself remains for us in fragments that survived the burning of the Library of Alexandria (*in which Christian fire, the teachings of Parmenides was one of the targets*).

Plato wrote his semi-fictional piece "Parmenides" & later writers like Simplicus & neo-Platonists relate for us some of the teachings from more complete texts available to them at that time. Indirect references appear throughout Socrates, Plato, & Aristotle who revered "father Parmenides" who Socrates himself dialogued with in his younger days. A Parmenides phrase attributed to Socrates (*along with "Socratic" questions – the Deductive reasoning of Parmenides, & the dialectics of Zeno*) is the well-known:

Know Thyself! which originally was *gnothe seauton*, γνωθι σεαυτόν & appears on the wall of the Oracle in *The Matrix* movie as the Latin *nosce teipsum*.

Most controversial of the statements of Parmenides is (in most Non-Dual & therefore faithful terms):

*auto noein estin te kai eivai*, αὐτο νοεῖν ἐστὶν τε καὶ εἶναι  
 "the same are Consciousness & Being"

Related fragments coming down to us, again from his *Proem*, "On Nature" include:

*estin omon pan*, εστιν ομον παν "Being is all there is."

*meden d' ouk estin*, μηδεν δ ουκεστιν or " 'Nothing' is that which does NOT exist."

More selections & interpretation of the above, including a Logic analysis of his *key phrase* appear in a couple of days in our 2<sup>nd</sup> & last installment on these 2 Eleatic Philosopher–Sages (*who along with Plotinus & Eckhart represent some of the very few Philosopher–Sages known in the West*).



### #58) Zeno Getting a Word In:

While we have more to say about Parmenides, we here weave in one of Zeno's efforts to show that *absurdity* results from everyday assumptions that are contrary to the Non-Dual principles of Parmenides. The first of these was Zeno's "Argument from *Denseness*".

"If there are many, they must be as many as they are & neither more nor less than that.

But if they are as many as they are, they would be limited.

But if there are many, things "that are" are unlimited.

For there are always others between the things that are, & again others between those, & so the things "that are" are unlimited. "

So, *paradoxically*, for the multiple separate objects, whose reality Parmenides rejects, each of these objects is "both limited & unlimited". Hence the *reductio ad absurdum* resulting from postulating Plurality instead of Non-Duality. Non-Duality is of course not concerned with all these "many things" discussed. But *IF* you posit them, a contradictory paradox of one sort or another will ever eventuate. [Sounds like a philosopher? Only, he would prefer even worse words like *instantiate*, & so on.]

On the surface, this ancient Argument against Plurality (vs. Non-Duality) from *Denseness* would seem to be defeated by Math developed thousands of years later, such as Georg Cantor's categorizing of different orders of Infinity. Physics of a Space-Time *continuum* would defeat the "finite discrete" scenario that Zeno offers as absurd. Alternately, (*in a manner contradicting Relativity's continuum*), a Quantum discrete

Universe would include a limit on the "smallness" of ultimate subdivisions. Even Space & Time would possess smallest Quanta, discrete bits, smaller than which there are none.

[Strictly speaking, "smaller than which" are *not definable*, but we can stick with the former statement as an "abbreviation."]

But let us offer a common sensical support for Zeno's point & then end this short installment with revelation of a "Big Secret" behind the Eleatic Philosophy of Parmenides, Zeno, & Melissus. Firstly, as to the "2 things" (*already counted*), we can call them A & B, 2 toy blocks, for example, side by side, in a wall made by a child playing with the blocks.

As tightly stacked as the blocks A & B might be, there is some "air" in the Space between the blocks. So, added to the 2, that would be a 3<sup>rd</sup> "thing" (& *nobody said the 3<sup>rd</sup> "thing" had to also be a block*).

In response, someone might say: "O.K. I grant you that '3<sup>rd</sup> 'thing' & something analogous in the various directions you might add to your scenario. But eventually, when all those are counted too, we still have a definite number.

I won't get into counting molecules of air here, because, however many, they too will count out to some definite number. But my answer would be this: "Is any one gap of air & the Space it fills the "same" as a block nearby, or is it different?" "Why of course it is different" – this would have to be the counter-response.

"O.K., fine", I would say, "but let us look a little closer. Let's look at the 'place' where air or intervening Space ends & the nearby Block begins. Whether that 'boundary' has *instantiation* or not, *physically*, it is conceptually 'another thing' & is definable in very *physical* terms. Note that your Atoms & Space-*quanta* or what-have-you are always pretty '*metaphysical*' anyway. So I claim as much 'reality' for my 'boundary' & another between that & the next 'thing' & so on."

Now to our end, not only with the *Big Secret*, but with that & also a slightly smaller *Secret* first. The latter, slightly smaller *Secret*, is that every Atom, Quantum, String, Planck unit of Space-Time, & so on requires a *boundary Space* or *gap* dividing it from the next "thing". We can't speak of the inside of Quarks, but we do "know" that a Nucleon, like a Proton or Neutron is mostly Void & Empty, with the 3 defining Quarks *like pencil dots on the field of a huge stadium*, with the Nucleon being the "stadium". The composite Nucleus in fact is also *like pencil dots on the field of a huge stadium*, with ist Atom being the "stadium". Between Atoms & Molecules is mostly Void & Empty, as between planets & stars, galaxies & galactic clusters & groups of clusters, & so on – all mostly Void & Empty. That *reductio ad absurdum* objection is just what the Eleatic

Philosophers leveled against the Atomists, Leucippus & Democritus. When the West forgot even that much for 2 thousand years, the Atoms of Dalton, Thompson, Sommerfield, Bohr, Heisenberg, & Schrodinger had the same *problem* – all that Void & Empty Space, each *gap* between "multiple entities" of any kind. The *problem* for Eleatic Philosophers was that Void & Empty *gaps* are made of Nothing & Nothing is *that* which does NOT exist!

As for the bigger *Secret*. Zeno & the other 2 Eleatic Philosophers had no way to anticipate the Math of 2 thousand years later, no would they have cared. That about which they argued was *unreal* from the start & no real sense could be made of any of it. But neither could unassailable intellectual arguments be verbally expressed to "prove" a contradictory *paradox*. But just to indicate the tendency for inevitable *paradox* to crop up was the intended "hint" for that Answer they already knew anyway. Those 3 Eleatic were not just philosophers, but in fact happened to be enlightened Sages, just like the greatest of Eastern philosophers. So like those, the Eleatic Sage *knew* that Non-Duality *is* Reality by virtue of having realized, having "become" the Non-Dual Reality itself. So theirs was a *fixed* game. However many holes might get poked in their rhetoric & argument (*compassionately offered to eliminate the suffering of all could grasp their points*), it was never about the rhetoric & argument anyway. Those, after all, were constructed from unreal words about unreal things. If the *paradox* hinted–at could "shock" the listener into self-examination, Self-Inquiry, then the effort was worthwhile, however much the criticism & ridicule the fallible "paradox" might be.

Your own Realization is the  
best help possible help to others.  
But there really are no others to be helped.  
A Realized being sees only the Self,  
just like a goldsmith estimating the gold  
in various items of jewelry sees only gold.  
When you identify yourself with the Body  
then only the forms & shapes are there.  
But when you transcend your Body  
the others disappear  
along with your Body-consciousness.  
Do *plants, trees, etc.* exist at all  
apart from the Self ? Find it out.  
You think that you see them.  
Thought is projected out from the Self.  
Find out from where it rises.  
Thoughts will cease to rise &  
the Self alone will remain.  
It is like a cinema-show.  
There is the light on the screen &  
the shadows flitting across it impress  
the audience as the enactment of some piece.  
If in the same play an audience also is shown  
on the screen as part of the performance,  
the seer & the seen will then both be on the screen.  
Apply it to yourself. You are the screen.  
The Self has created the Ego.  
The Ego has its accretions of thoughts  
which are displayed as the World,  
the trees & the plants of which you are asking.  
In Reality, all these are nothing but the Self.  
If you see the Self, the same will be found to be all,  
everywhere & always. Nothing but the Self exists.

*selection from Sri Ramana Maharshi*

## #59) Parmenides Finale:

“What Is” (*to eon*) is “true reality” (*alêtheia*);

“what is not” (*to mê eon*) is unreal,

contrasting with *arche* (ἀρχή), the origin,

the necessary part of Reality:

*For never shall this prevail, that things that are not "are".*

[This is the original basis for the later Latin phrase *horror vacui* about how "nature abhors vacuum" which was much later applied to the Entropy "driving" diffusion of matter into a vacuum.]

**Parmenides of Elea** Παρμενίδης ὁ Ἐλεάτης, 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Greek sage – final (*for now*) installment

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of his *Proem*, Parmenides contrasted his Non-Dual "Consciousness = Being" teaching with the world of illusion — that is, the world of the senses & the erroneous opinions of mankind founded upon those sense impressions. In his opinion truth lies in the perception that Existence *is*, & in seeing the error in the idea that Non-Existence also can *be*. That which has real Existence is incapable of further evolution or development, & is imperishable, immutable, unbounded, & indivisible. What is various & mutable, evolving & "becoming" is a delusive phantom. Truth is found as the pure essence of Being; the phenomenal world is a delusion, & the opinions formed concerning that world have no value.

Parmenides goes on to consider in the light of this principle the consequences of saying that anything is. In the first place, it cannot have "come into being" (*thus rejecting the world of Flux – "becoming" described by Heraclitus*). If something had evolved, it must have arisen from *nothing* or from *something*. It cannot have arisen from Nothing; for there is no Nothing. It cannot have arisen from something; for there is nothing than itself. Nor can anything else besides Being itself come into being; for there can be no empty space in which it could do so. Is something existing or is it not? If it is, then it is now, all at once. In this way Parmenides refutes all accounts of the origin of the world: *ex nihilo nihil fit* – from Nothing, no thing is made.

"what is" (ὅπως ἐστίν) is Real; "what is not" (ὥς οὐκ ἐστίν) is Illusion

Further, if something exists, it simply is what it is, & it cannot be more or less. There is, therefore, as much of it in one place as in another. Being is continuous & indivisible; for there is nothing but itself which could prevent its parts being in contact with on another. It is therefore full, a continuous indivisible *Plenum*. (*That is directed against the*

*Pythagorean theory of a discontinuous reality.*) Further, Being is immovable. If it moved, it must move again into empty space, & empty space is Nothing, & there is no Nothing. What is "is", & there is nothing beyond it. "Coming into being" & "ceasing to be" are mere 'names' (*concepts*), & so is *motion*, & still more *color* & the like. Those are not even concepts; for a thought must be a thought first of *something* that is, & none of those qualities can be.

So a doctrine like that of Parmenides deprives the world we know of all claim to existence, & reduces it to something which is hardly even an Illusion. If we are to give an intelligible account of the world, we must certainly introduce motion somehow.

And that is not the only startling conclusion Parmenides draws. For he also holds that there is no coming into existence, or ceasing to exist. According to Parmenides, everything that exists is *permanent, ungenerated, indestructible, & unchanging*.

Parmenides goes even further, denying that there is such a thing as *plurality*. On this view, Parmenides denies that there are *many* things, maintaining instead that only *One* thing exists.

*That which is not, because it cannot to be accomplished, is Illusion.*

The linguistic analysis of the Parmenides *Proem* begins with parsing the verb "to be", "is" & its different senses, such as the *existential & predicative* senses. Since his use of that verb is without an *object*, the ordinary *predicative* sense would be incomplete, the Parmenides usage is taken as the existential "is" so as to mean "it exists".

Given that much, after pursuing the "path" of "it is", Parmenides declares the alternative path of "it is not" is "completely unlearnable" for "you may not know that which is not".

Parmenides thus will admit nothing besides the One to be Reality. Being cannot begin, or cease to exist. It "*was*" not, it "*will*" not be, but it is, in a full undivided Present. From what else could have been derived? Out of non-Being? But non-Being does not exist, & cannot produce anything. Out of Being? This could not produce anything but itself. & the same holds good for destruction.

Generally speaking, what has been or will be is not, but it cannot be said of Being, that it is not.

Being is moreover indivisible. There is nowhere anything distinct from Being by which its parts might be divided. All Space is filled by Being alone. It is immovable, in one place, for itself & identical with itself. Since it cannot be incomplete or defective. Being therefore is all that really & exists as Unity without becoming or passing away, without



change of place or of form, a whole, throughout undivided, homogenous, on all sides, equally balanced, & in all points equally perfect. Parmenides therefore regarded All as on eternal immovable *Essence*. The Real is the *Full* (πλεον *pleon*). Parmenides warns us not to trust the Senses that suggest testimony otherwise.

Suppose something does not exist. How, then, would it be possible for it to exist? Can it come into existence? No, for there is nothing for it to come into existence from. So if it doesn't now exist, it's never going to come into existence, & it couldn't possibly exist.

Parmenides denies the possibility that a thing can come into existence from something else. This would be neither from itself, nor from nothing; since it would be from a different being, it would, in a way, be both from a being & from a not-being. It would come into existence from a different being, & from not having itself previously existed. Aristotle supports this alternative but the Eleatic Philosophers reject it.

In steps, what follows from the central thesis of Parmenides includes:

There is no coming into existence or ceasing to exist. [*Generation & Destruction*]

There is no alteration or change. (*Change*)

There is no movement. (*Movement*)

There is no plurality. (*Plurality*)

### *Generation & Destruction*

Suppose you say that something, *x*, comes into existence. That means that there was a time when *x* did not exist. But you are talking about what does not exist. A parallel argument for the impossibility of ceasing to exist. Given that there can be no coming into existence or going out of existence, important consequences follow. Parmenides declares that there could be no difference between past, present, & future, no flow of Time, or Time in the ordinary sense. Nor "*was*" it ever nor "*will*" it be, since it is now, all together, one, continuous. Being must either fully be or not. How could the present differ from the past, or from the future? Any difference from one time to another would involve some previous state of affairs going out of existence, & some new state of affairs coming into existence to replace it. If there is no generation & no destruction, then there can be no temporal differences. The World is exactly the same at one time as it is at any other time.

### *Change*

It is clear that without temporal differences, there can be no change. For change involves the World being different from one time to another, & such differences would involve

things coming into or going out of existence. If something were to change or alter, what was previously the case would have to cease to be the case, & what previously was not the case would come to be the case. If a thing changes in any respect, it is “rearranged”. If it is rearranged, a new arrangement comes into existence. But nothing can come into existence.

### *Movement*

Movement can occur only if the moving thing has an empty space to move into, & that the empty space is the same thing as nothing, or not-being. But not-being can't be. So there can't be any movement.

Movement is just a kind of change (*change of location*), & change cannot occur unless temporal differences are real.

### *Plurality*

Why can't there be a world of many ungenerated, unchanging, indestructible things (*as per Atomism*) ? But Reality is One & that there cannot be a Plurality of things. Suppose there were more than one thing. Then there would have to be something separating one from the other, otherwise they would not be 2 (*as per Zeno's Argument from Denseness*). But then what separates one from the other? Is there a space between them? No, that can't be, for there is no empty space. If there is no space between them, then they run together, & are One, not 2. Furthermore, if there were 2 things, it would be true to say that one of them is not the other. But then we are “saying something is not,” which is impossible. What does not exist is the denied existence of the One being the other. Then again, if the World is devoid of movement or qualitative change, there cannot be any qualitative difference. There cannot be difference of any kind.

Suppose there is a difference between *a* & *b*. That means there must be some property such that *a* is something having that property & *b* is not. But when you say that *b* “is not” something having that property you are saying that *b*, having that property, does not exist. Speaking of what does not exist is meaningless. So the Universe is devoid of difference of any kind. So how can *a* & *b* be 2 things? There is no difference between them. No property that *a* has & *b* lacks. So *a* = *b*, & so on for anything else.

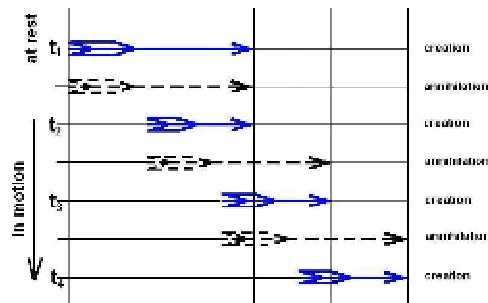
Parmenides holds that a denial of existence cannot be both meaningful & true. For if it were true, then what it is about would be non-existent. So it wouldn't be about anything. & if it's not about anything, then it is not even meaningful. If you can't talk about what doesn't exist, then you can't even deny its existence. So denials of existence (“*negative existential statements*”) are likewise impossible. The problem with negative *existentials* is that a necessary condition of their truth is a sufficient condition of their meaninglessness.

This problem of *negative existential* statements (*discussed by Bertrand Russell*) is referred to as “Parmenides' paradox.”

In summary, Parmenides denies *generation & destruction, motion, change, qualitative difference, & plurality*. Anyone who tries to assert that there is such a thing as *change*, etc. is reduced to attempting to talk about what does not exist.

See how you function,  
 watch the motives &  
 results of your actions.  
 Study the prison you have  
 built around yourself,  
 by inadvertence.

*selection from Nisargadatta's I Am That*



Mystery of Motion, Lorentz Contraction and Quantum  
 Perpetual Creation-Annihilation are the Answers to Zeno Paradox.

## #60) Zeno's (converging) infinite series error (retrospectively):

Yes, Zeno failed to fully anticipate advance in Mathematics 2 thousand years later. How much do mathematicians today anticipate the Mathematics of 2 thousand years from now? The Arrow that could not get to the target, the Achilles who could not catch up with the hare, these were among the numerous scenarios the Zeno put out there, are hints & suggestions, not at all, careful *proof* of anything. His self-chosen mission was to back up the Eleatic Philosophy principles of his guru, Parmenides. One principle Zeno focused on was the impossibility of Motion, or any other kind of Change. To assume such in the ordinary manner, at face value, was to veer from Non-Duality, & incidentally to encounter Paradox in many cases – the latter serving as a auxiliary *hint*, not a *proof*.

The most Absolute arguments against Motion & Change start with the seamless, homogenous Oneness of Reality which is simultaneously infinite, Existence – Being & vast, pure Consciousness. Nothing else exists, hence no separate "thing" to undergo Motion relative to that Reality. Nor could Change like  $A \rightarrow B$  be possible is there were no separate A &/or B.

In a more mundane sense, Change & Time itself are illusions, as is the Motion by which we often detect Change or measure Time. For instance, I seem to see the Sun *here* in the Sky, & then *there*. I interpolate Motion of the Sun from *here* to *there* & conceptualize

Motion & Change of position, as well as the Time so measured. But that *interpolation* was in my Mind only, as were the Perceptions. As for "my Mind", well don't get me started on that – a topic for a later day. Now that whole argument was far from rigorously pinned down & defined, even though the gist of it was true. Like Zeno's Arrow & likewise Achilles, all the foregoing was just another *hint* for the intuition. A more analytical (*but still partial*) argument that follows finishes our extended visit with the Eleatic Philosophers (*for now*).

Time. Motion, any Change  $A \rightarrow B$ , requires at least 2 *states, situations, scenarios, things*, ... A & B etc. How do we separately define A & B. In some concrete, abstract, or other conceptual manner, we establish a separating Boundary between, or Gap intervening between A & B. Ultimately, whether it lie between this boundary or that, somewhere betwixt & between there, there has to be a *Void Gap*, if only between Atom, within an Atom, within a Nucleon, between Quarks, between Strings, somewhere, there has to be a *Void Gap* to allow the definition of Time. Motion, any Change  $A \rightarrow B$ . But *Void Emptiness* is *Nothing*, & *Nothing* is what does not exist.

Postscript: somehow I find it funny (*sympathetically & not cruelly*) that blogs, bulletin boards, etc that include group participation in a discussions of *Radical Skepticism, Brain – in – a – Vat, Non-Duality*, & so on, inevitably are filled with expressions of what so & so "prefers" so that they can "get on with life." But Reality may not be up for a vote (& *in fact is far better than any alternative that could be imagined*). The "life" a given commenter wants to "get on with" can only be better with Self-Knowledge, not worse. Without Self-Realization, Enlightenment, ..., the seemingly non-liberated non-skeptic goes blindly.

To expect the perception of **Forms** – the  
**World, Body, Senses, & Thought** – to  
disappear at its own level to transcend  
them is like expecting the **Dream** character  
in one's **Dream** to see the **Dream Forms** –  
**Dream World, Dream Body, Dream**  
**Senses, & Dream Thoughts** – disappear  
within the **Dream**, before waking up.

Nome, Essence of the Teaching (2.53)

## #61) Zeno's Finite Size argument against Plurality:

Among other contributions, Zeno is credited with the "*Dialectic*" (of Dialogue) technique of arguing for or against a position by careful logical reasoning – & in particular the technique of arguing against a view by showing that it entails unacceptable consequences. In the absence of such a method one can only defend a position by mystical revelation say, or by rhetorical rather than rational appeal, or by force perhaps. & according to Aristotle, Zeno was the inventor of the method in philosophy, though such an approach has been a part of mathematics for even longer.

Specifically, in the course of elucidating Non-Duality, Parmenides rejected pluralism & the reality of any kind of change. For him all was one indivisible, unchanging Reality, & any appearances to the contrary were illusions, to be dispelled by reason & *revelation*.

We'll pick up the *revelation* aspect again at the conclusion of this episode. *Reason* for Parmenides & his disciple Melissus amounted to a long stream of successive Deductive conclusions. But Zeno often cast mundane scenarios in which he would argue that *Plurality* lead to *reductio ad absurdum* Paradoxes. As noted in a previous posting reviewing Zeno's *Argument from Denseness*, Zeno doesn't take these arguments too seriously since they are intended as *hints*, backed up by his "ace in the hole" – the *revelation* mentioned again here at our conclusion. & so all the same applies to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Zeno hint, his *Argument from Finite Size*.

Zeno attempts to show that the assumption that there are many things leads to a contradiction: that is: each thing is both infinitely small & infinitely large, or in other words:

*Each thing is "so small as not to have size."*

*Each thing is "so large as to be unlimited."*

What motivates Zeno to argue that *Plurality* implies that separate *things* are "so small as not to have size," is the following consequent deduction. If an infinitesimally small entity it should be added to something else that exists, it would not make it any bigger. For if it were of no size & was added, the "receiving" object will not increase in size. & so it follows immediately that what is added is *Nothing*. & when it is subtracted, the other *thing* is no smaller, just like it was not increased when the same was added. Thus the thing being added or subtracted is nothing.

Thus Zeno argued that if there is *Plurality*, some spatially extended objects exist. In-extended things do not exist. Since it is extended, it has at least 2 spatially distinct parts, one "in front" of the other. Since the parts presumably exist, they too have extension, & so they also each have at least 2 spatially distinct parts; & so on without end. & hence, if a *thing* is extended at all, is infinite in extent.

So if it exists, each thing must have some size & thickness, & part of it must be apart from the rest. The same reasoning holds concerning the part that is "in front." For that too will have size & part of it will in turn be "in front." This process can be repeated an infinite number of times, forever. For no such part of it will be the last one added, nor will there be one part that is not related to other parts. This continues to infinite size. Therefore, if there are many things, they must be both small & large; so small as not to have size, but so large as to be unlimited.

Zeno argues that it follows that they do not exist at all; since the result of joining or removing a size-less object to anything is no change at all. He concludes that the thing added or removed is literally *Nothing*.

**Refuse all thoughts except one:  
the thought 'I am'. The mind will  
rebel in the beginning, but with  
patience & perseverance it  
will yield & keep quiet.**

*selection from Nisargadatta's I Am That*

If the infinite series of divisions he describes were repeated infinitely many times then a definite collection of parts would result. These "parts" need not be distinct ordinary objects like apples, cells, molecules, electrons or so on. They may be merely "geometric" parts of these objects. If such parts exist, it follows that they are extended, & an infinite sum of finite parts is infinite.

Regardless of some flaws discovered, sometimes after thousands of years of progress in Mathematics, Zeno's *hints* are backed up by what Parmenides called "revelation" - direct Knowledge resulting from Self-realization. That about which they argued was *unreal* from the start & no real sense could be made of any of it. But neither could unassailable intellectual arguments be verbally expressed to "prove" a contradictory *paradox*. But just to indicate the tendency for inevitable *paradox* to crop up was the intended "hint" for that Answer they already knew anyway. Those 3 Eleatic were not just philosophers, but in fact happened to be enlightened Sages, just like the greatest of Eastern philosophers. So like those, the Eleatic Sage *knew* that Non-Duality *is* Reality by virtue of having realized, having "become" the Non-Dual Reality itself. So theirs was a *fixed* game. However many holes might get poked in their rhetoric & argument (*compassionately offered to eliminate the suffering of all could grasp their points*), it was never about the rhetoric & argument anyway. Those, after all, were constructed from unreal words about unreal things. If the *paradox* hinted-at could "shock" the listener into self-examination, Self-Inquiry, then the effort was worthwhile, however much the criticism & ridicule the fallible "paradox" might be.

**True happiness cannot  
be found in things  
that change & pass away.  
Pleasure & pain alternate.  
Happiness comes from the Self  
& can be found in the Self only.  
Find your real Self & all else  
will come with it.**

*from Nisargadatta's I Am That*





## #62) Quintessence of Vedanta:

589. "How could Being be born from non-being? In fact it was Being alone that existed in the beginning, the One-without-a-2<sup>nd</sup>." [Upanisad reference Cha, VI, 2, 2.]

Anyone who may have seen the "Parmenides" episodes of this Blog should recognize the signature teaching of (5<sup>th</sup> century B.C) Parmenides in "Being cannot come out of non-being." Since this installment about Sri Shankara's "Quintessence of Vedanta" (*Sarva-Vedanta-Siddhanta-Sara*) dates closer to the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D. one might wonder about trans-continental influence. But since the above Vedic quote repeated by Shankara pre-dates Parmenides, any such influence would have to have gone the other way, or not. Regardless of Time & Space, the experience & revelation of Truth characteristic of one Sage is identical to that of another, even if the words don't always coincide.

In another sense, it matters little because the specific experience & wording of one Sage (*likely presumed by us to be "particular" to the "inner experience" of that Sage*) is actually not different in essence to the "experience" of another who hears or reads those words. For that hearing or reading is not really "outer experience" different from some other "inner experience." Experience of Reality is experience of Reality here or there, now or then, in this manner or in that manner. All those "outer" distinctions are not the real essence (*quintessence*) of the Truth in question.

Take a Scripture like Sri Shankara's "Quintessence of Vedanta" sitting on a library or bookstore shelf. Those not attuned at that moment will not likely give it a 2<sup>nd</sup> glance, or if perusing, they will not likely "get it" at all. Only those "ready" will even hear about Shankara, & hearing, only those will begin to understand. Others will just pass it by for some later decade of lifetime. In any case our selection continues.

590. "Existence cannot come out of non-existence."

612. "The Existence of the Self is thus woven inextricably with the idea 'I exist' & this concept persists at all levels of Consciousness (*waking, dreaming & deep dreamless sleep*). From this it can be inferred that Self does not change & is Eternal.

613. "Every one thinks that he has continued to exist & says: 'I have always existed.' This idea knows no let-up or hindrance. No one ever entertains the notion 'I do not exist.' Such a statement would in itself prove one's existence, & the truth of it indicates how the Self is actually Eternal."

614. "Infancy & childhood, youth & old age come & go. Waking gives way to dreaming. & dreaming to deep dreamless sleep. But the stream of Consciousness goes on forever. The Self is the Witness Consciousness . It is the eternal 'I am'."

616. " 'I who have had dreams & then fell happily into deep dreamless sleep, am the same who is now wide awake.' Such is the experience of every one. It is in this way that the continuity of the Self is experienced. There can be no doubt as to the Existence of the Self."

620. "Just as the Sun is not in need of any other light, either to make itself know or to reveal other objects, so also does Consciousness which is inherent in the Self make itself known as the 'I – consciousness."

623. "Since the Self is the object of supreme Love, it follows that Happiness is inherent in the Self. Bliss is not only natural to the Self, it is its distinctive nature."

631. "Supreme Bliss is inherent in the Self. Whoever substitutes, for the Self, anything else as the object of his quest for Happiness merely pursues suffering."

635. "That is because people do not know that Happiness is inherent in the Self. They do not know the real nature of the Self. That is why they fondly pursue external objects."

636. "A foolish person might be unaware of the treasure hidden below."

637. "It is natural that people should, by mistake, identify the Self with the various gross & subtle bodies. People do not know that all these objects are really sources of misery. The reason for that is that they have forgotten the blissful nature of the Self. It is as a result of their ignorance that they pursue pleasure, & go in quest of external objects. Such persons merely seek suffering."

640. "All those who identify themselves with their physical bodies tend to seek Happiness in things external. They think about them, go in quest of them, & wish to have them, for they imagine that Happiness is really inherent in external objects."

643. "Nor can it be said that Happiness is an attribute of the Mind, because, in the absence of the given object, Happiness is not experienced by the Mind."

644. "It may so happen that, even though the desired object is present, its presence may not yield Happiness."

646. "It therefore follows that Happiness is not a property of the Mind. Nor can we say that Happiness is a property of the Self, for it is said that the Self is devoid of all attributes & properties."

652. "The lesser happiness that is derived from external objects is always coupled with suffering, both at the time of enjoyment & when the happiness comes to an end. This is so because someone else is happier, & due to the fact that all such happiness will one day finally come to an end."

655. "The happiness which the Mind seems to feel in the possession of external objects is really the inherent Happiness of the Self. The Self is Bliss itself, & the Bliss of the Self lasts forever. There is nothing like the Happiness of the Self because it is full, eternal, unique. & free from fear."

666. "If pure Consciousness of Bliss, it is because Bliss is its inherent nature. The Self is compact (*densely filled with*) of Bliss."

670. "In the same way, whatever may be the nature of Happiness which may be conferred by any material object, all that happiness is in reality nothing more than the *reflected* Happiness of the Mind. The insentient objects by themselves cannot confer Happiness."

673. "It is this supreme Self that is referred to as Sat – Chit – Ananda, Existence – Consciousness – Bliss. This Self is Brahman & Brahman is pure Being. Pure Consciousness, & also *compact* of Bliss."

675. "There is nothing else other than the Self. The Self is One–without–a–2<sup>nd</sup>, & unique. Moreover, the Self is the sole Reality, for the World is unreal. The Self is pure & devoid of qualities. The Self, is Existence – Consciousness – Bliss. But we should not regard these 3 as "qualities" of the Self, which Is without qualities. Rather, the 3 terms indicate the 'thing in itself', the Self in itself."

680. "When once the apparent reality of the World has been set aside, all that remains is pure Being, by a process of 'negation of negation'." [*neti, neti* – on possible precursor of Self-Inquiry.]"

Go deep into the sense of 'I am'  
and you will find.  
How do you find a thing you have mislaid or forgotten?  
You keep it in your mind until you recall it.  
The sense of being, of 'I am' is the first to emerge.

Ask yourself whence it comes,  
or just watch it quietly.  
When the mind stays in the 'I am', without moving,  
you enter a state that cannot be verbalized  
but can be experienced.  
All you need to do is to try and try again.

*selection from Nisargadatta's I Am That*

The Self has no Source  
or starting place in Time,  
nor even any place at  
all in Time or Space.

### #63) Quintessence of Vedanta part 2:

Quintessence of Vedanta 2<sup>nd</sup> installment: in this selection Sri Shankara provide a less typical (*for him*) rationale for both "seeing" a World, while knowing that there is no World. To not be bound to a World by attachment is the key necessity. Struggling with the non-reality of the World (*such as in "then what is this book ?" etc.*) is counter-productive. To some extent the same holds for the "fast track" of seeing the unreality of the Body & the Mind. Being free of identification with these is sufficient. Unreality, ultimately established for the Ego, that is the "quintessence" of Enlightenment.

297. "To attribute to that which real, the nature or the properties of unreal objects is known as superimposition. It is as though one imagines that a wayside rope is a snake."

298. "The Supreme Brahman is characterized by Truth, Knowledge, & Bliss (*satchitananada*), & that is the only Reality. The Universe is perceived to be real, because it is superimposed upon Brahman, just as a blue color is superimposed upon the Sky."

299. "Ignorance is the cause of the World seeming to be real. But Ignorance is something other than Reality. As both Ignorance & its effect are unreal, eliminate both Ignorance which is the cause, & the World which is the effect."

301. "Although the presence of *silver* in the Mother-of-Pearl is unreal, the Mother-of-Pearl [*glittery surface of some oyster shells*] as such is real. Ignorance, therefore, is the cause of all such unreal superimposition, & that is why the Universe seems to be real."

302. "As Ignorance is the product of the 3 *gunas* ('qualities'), it is indescribable, & we cannot say of it, that it is or is not. But such is its peculiar characteristic: that it is negated in the light of Knowledge of the ultimate Reality, Brahman."

303. "Although it is unreal in itself, Ignorance has Brahman for its foundation, & it is contained in Brahman. But Brahman is not tainted by contact with Ignorance, for Brahman is like a gem which nothing can defile."

304. "The animate & the inanimate, & all that are produced out of them, prove the existence of Brahman. Thus when one says: 'I do not know Brahman', even that speech should be taken as proof of the existence of Brahman, which is Existence itself."

305. "One may call it by various names, such as *ajnana* ("not-knowing") or Ignorance, *Prakriti* (Nature) or *avidya* or *nescience*, the absence of Knowledge. By whatever name it is called, all that may be said of it is that, like the proverbial *silver* in Mother-of-Pearl, it neither *is* (*as appearance*), nor *is not* (*as substrate shell*)."

306. "Ignorance is neither one with Brahman, nor entirely separate from Brahman. Like a lamp & its light, it is in Brahman, but is not itself Brahman. Like a sprout & the seed which gives birth to it, it is neither a part of Brahman, nor apart from it."

307. "The wise say that nature of Ignorance is inexplicable. Yet they distinguish 2 aspects of Ignorance – the one, is cosmic collective aspect, & the other in relation to the individual."

309. "In its collective cosmic aspect, Ignorance is dominated by the *guna* "quality" of *sattva* or purity. It is known as Maya, the cosmic Illusion, the veil that hides Reality."

457. "Since the Self is pure Consciousness, it undergoes no change. The Self remains the eternal Witness of all changes. In itself, the Self is the Knower. The Intellect is object of its knowledge. The Self, as such, is at no time an object of knowledge."

458. "The innermost Self of all is self-effulgent, devoid of parts, unattached, pure & subject to no kind of modification. It is Bliss eternal. It is the witnessing Self that is the source of all Consciousness. It is indivisible, free from adjuncts, & devoid of all attributes."

459. "The Self is not subject to Birth & growth, or to Death & dissolution. It is our inmost nature, devoid of growth, decline, & Death. The Self is not killed when the Body is destroyed."

461. "People superimpose the Self upon that which is not the Self, & conversely, they superimpose that, which is not the Self, upon the Self. Out of this erroneous understanding, they become subject to the bonds of Samsara."

463. "It is only on account of a defect of the Intellect that one wrongly superimposes the ideas of Birth, old age, & Death; or those of thirst, fear, pleasure & pain upon the Self. All these are characteristics of what is not the Self. As for the Self, its nature is entirely different."

464. "In as much as all superimposition is due to delusion, all these attributes in no way affect the nature of the Self, even though they may be superimposed upon the Self."

468. "Superimposition is nothing more than the qualities perceived in a different context & they have resemblance as their basis. But the Self is not an object of perception. How is it then possible to superimpose upon the Self the attributes which do not pertain to it?"

469. "It has been said that the Self cannot be perceived by the Senses. If at no time can the Self be an object of knowledge, what can it have in common with external objects, all of which should be classified as not being the Self, & how can they have anything in common with the Self ?"

473. "The Self is not a compound of parts & whole. At no time does the Self become an object of knowledge, even though everyone refers to it by the term "I" of the "Self", for it without-a-2<sup>nd</sup> & is known immediately within oneself."

474. "The existence of the Self is a fact of experience. No one ever thinks: "I do not exist." Therefore no one ever doubts the Existence of the innermost Self."

475. "That is why no one ever demands a proof for one's own existence. The Existence of pure Consciousness is therefore an axiom of Knowledge, for upon it is based all other proofs."

476. "Like the Sun that lies hidden behind a cluster of cloud formations, the Self lies veiled by the Ego. All that is the effect of Maya (*Illusion the include Veiling – avarana & Projection – vikshepa*). That is the reason why we do not know the Self as an *object* of knowledge."

481. "The Self shines by the light of its own Consciousness. The Intellect (*buddhi*) is akin to the Self."

482. "By virtue of its proximity to the innermost Self, the Intellect catches the light of the Self, just a crystal set in sunlight reflects light."

483. "The Intellect catches the light of the Self. Similarly, again, the Mind catches the light of the Intellect, & the Sense in their turn catches the light of the Mind. Finally, the physical Body comes to feel what is comprehended by the Sense organs. That is why one comes to think that the Self is constituted out of a combination of the Body & the Sense organs, although in reality such is not the case."

484. "That is why ignorant people mistake the intellect for the Self. They superimpose the *reflection* & the *reflector* upon that which is *reflected*."

485. "The moment something other than the Self is mistaken for the Self, every such act of superimposition becomes in turn the cause of the next superimposition."

486. "It is only when we wake up for Deep Dreamless Sleep that we perceive characteristics of Samsara, in Waking or Dream. But such is the outcome of *avidya* Ignorance, & *avidya* is "beginningless" for it is without a cause."

590. "Existence cannot come out of non-existence."

591. "Without clay, one cannot produce a jar out of nothing. Any given thing can merge & become one only with that from which it has emanated."

Consider the **World** to be a **Dream**,  
& discover the **absence** of the **Dreamer**.  
*Nome, Essence of the Teaching (1.69)*

### #64) Quintessence of Vedanta part 3:

678. "The supreme Self is unique. There is nothing else like it. It is Non-Dual, *advaita*. That is why there cannot be any qualities which differentiate the Self from all other objects. The unreality of the World would render all such differentiation invalid."

679. "Knowers of Brahman declare that the World is unreal. Just as rope alone is, when the illusion of the snake in it has been negated, so also, when the World comes to be regarded as unreal & has been negated, all that remains is the non-dual Brahman."

683. "That which is the product of something else is, in reality, nothing other than that from which it has emanated.. All objects made of clay, such as jars & the like are, in reality, only diverse forms of the clay from which they are made."

684. "In & out, they have nothing else other than clay for their being. Apart from the clay they have no being. We may speak of the neck of a jar, but even that is in reality but a form of clay & nothing else."

685. "It is only those who are not wise who imagine that a jar is real separate thing in itself. But in reality it is the clay out of which it has been made that is real. On careful examination we find that the difference lies only in the name, & not in the thing itself."

686. "The Effect is not something other than the Cause which produced it. In this way, the whole of the material Universe around us might be reduced finally to the elements from which it has emanated."

689. "The one supreme Brahman has existed before all else. Without undergoing any change in itself, it is the abode of all that changes. In itself, Brahman is pure Being. It would be an error to imagine that there should be something beyond Brahman also."

690. "Just as when there is defective vision, the one moon seem to be double, so also, as a result of the defective comprehension of the Intellect, the One Reality seems to be multiple. When once the Illusion of the Intellect is conquered, the one Reality, Brahman, reasserts itself & makes itself manifest."

691. "No one would imagine a rope to be a snake when one knows that it is no more than a rope. The snake which the imagination conjured up becomes one with the real object, the rope. The snake which the imagination conjured up becomes one with the real object, the rope. In the same way, when Brahman is realized, the idea of the World, & the delusion which causes the idea, both merge in Brahman."

692. "There is nothing like Brahman. When the delusion is past, the seeming reality which the delusion conjured up also comes to an end. With the vanishing of all distinctions, all that remains is Brahman, & Brahman is devoid of attributes."

693. "The Self seem to be one with the adjuncts, only as long as the adjuncts are real. But when the adjuncts fade away, just as when the unreal dream objects fade away upon waking, all that remains as the Self & the Self is not other than Brahman."

694. "If a jar, for example, cannot be said to have any real existence as such, it follows that the Space which is apparently enclosed by the jar is, in reality, only with universal Space. In the same way, if the



adjuncts have no real being, the Self which is revealed in those adjuncts is not other than Brahman, pure & eternal."

695. "Space is ever the same, irrespective of the presence or the absence of a jar which seems to divide off a small part of the Space. Even so is it with the supreme Reality, for how can that which is full & indivisible be divided into parts ?"

[Here again, as throughout - agreement with the Eleatic Philosophers though mutual awareness unlikely. But is similarity inspires a repeat of a comment attached to an earlier Quintessence segment.]

Anyone who may have seen the "Parmenides" episodes of this Blog should recognize the signature teaching of (5<sup>th</sup> century B.C) Parmenides in "Being cannot come out of non-being." Since this installment about Sri Shankara's "Quintessence of Vedanta" (*Sarva-Vedanta-Siddhanta-Sara*) dates closer to the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D. one might wonder about trans-continental influence. But since the above Vedic quote repeated by Shankara pre-dates Parmenides, any such influence would have to have gone the other way, or not. Regardless of Time & Space, the experience & revelation of Truth characteristic of one Sage is identical to that of another, even if the words don't always coincide.

In another sense, it matters little because the specific experience & wording of one Sage (*likely presumed by us to be "particular" to the "inner experience" of that Sage*) is actually not different in essence to the "experience" of another who hears or reads those words. For that hearing or reading is not really "outer experience" different from some other "inner experience." Experience of Reality is experience of Reality here or there, now or then, in this manner or in that manner. All those "outer" distinctions are not the real essence (*quintessence*) of the Truth in question.

Take a Scripture like Sri Shankara's "Quintessence of Vedanta" sitting on a library or bookstore shelf. Those not attuned at that moment will not likely give it a 2<sup>nd</sup> glance, or if perusing, they will not likely "get it" at all. Only those "ready" will even hear about Shankara, & hearing, only those will begin to understand. Others will just pass it by for some later decade or lifetime.

